



THE CAMP-FIRE
OF
IAD ANTHONY

EVERETT T. TOMLINSON

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THE CAMP-FIRE OF MAD ANTHONY



(Page 367)

THE FEARLESS LITTLE BAND HELD ITS GROUND

THE CAMP-FIRE OF MAD ANTHONY

BY

EVERETT T. TOMLINSON

*Author of "The Rider of the Black Horse," "Marching against
the Iroquois," "Four Boys in the Yellowstone,"
"Winning His 'W,'" etc., etc.*



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PREFACE

THE following quotation from Historical Collections of the State of New Jersey (Barber and Howe) will in a measure explain the part which the young "tea-burners" play in this story:—

"Shortly after the destruction of the tea in Boston, the East India Tea Company determined to try whether they might not meet with better success in sending a cargo into the Cohansey. Accordingly the Greyhound, with a cargo of tea bound to Philadelphia, came up the river and discharged at Greenwich, depositing the tea in the cellar of a house standing in front of the market ground. In the evening of Thursday, November 22, 1774, it was taken possession of by about forty men, *disguised as Indians*, who deliberately conveyed the chests from the cellar, piled them in an adjoining field, and burnt them in one general conflagration.

"The names of these bold and determined patriots, says Johnson, deserve to be handed down to the latest posterity,

and as far as can be recollected I herewith cheerfully record them: Dr. Ebenezer Elmer, Richard Howell, afterward a major in the army and Governor of New Jersey, David Pierson, Stephen Pierson, Silas Whitecar, Timothy Elmer, Rev. Andrew Hunter, Rev. Philip Fithian, Alexander Moore, Jr., Clarence Parvin, John Hunt, James Hunt, Lewis Howell, Henry Starks, James Ewing, father of the late chief justice of New Jersey, Dr. Thomas Ewing, Josiah Seeley and Joel Fithian, Esquires.

“This bold act of these men (for they were all young fellows) produced much excitement in the lower counties with such persons who secretly were disposed to favor the British interest. They were loud in their denunciations against these patriots for what they called ‘such wanton waste of property, and that they deserved to be severely handled for it.’ The owners of the tea, finding that some commiseration for their loss had been excited among the people in the neighborhood, thought proper to try whether they could not obtain remuneration by having recourse to suits at law. Therefore, previous to the sitting of the supreme court in April, 1775, as

many as half a dozen suits for damages . . . were brought against some of the Whigs. . . . Frederick Smyth, the chief justice, held the oyer and terminer in Cumberland County, next after the burning of the tea, and charged the grand jury on the subject, but they found no bills. He sent them out again, but they still refused to find any bills, for this plain reason — they were Whigs. But as the American contest soon became serious . . . the suits were dropped and never after renewed.”

The writer takes special pleasure in acknowledging his indebtedness to Miss Mary C. Fithian,¹ of Greenwich, New Jersey, who has been at great pains to give him many facts, excerpts from diaries, etc. Perhaps her interest and spirit may best be judged by the closing words of a letter which she sent the writer (February 23, 1905) concerning the young tea-burners: —

“I will add that Joel Fithian was my grandfather and the Rev. Philip Fithian was his cousin. James and Thomas Ewing were brothers of my grandmother Ewing.

¹ This aged woman died only a few days after her last letter was received by the author. — E. T. T.

You see I take pleasure in being one of their [the tea-burners'] descendants."

Careful investigation has made the exact date of the burning somewhat doubtful, and there are differences of opinion concerning the house in the cellar of which the tea was stored and the "field" in which it was burned. There is not the slightest question, however, as to the fact of the tea itself having been destroyed in the manner described, although a *complete* list of the participants is not to be had. It may be unnecessary for the writer to state that his purpose has not been to write a detailed history of the event, but rather to write a story into which he has woven some unquestioned facts in the struggle for the independence of the colonies. Although in some respects he has taken advantage of "a story-teller's license," still for every adventure in this book there is a basis of fact. His liberty has been used in ascribing deeds to certain characters in the story, which historical accuracy might compel him to locate in other villages than Greenwich and ascribe to other heroes than those he has used. But the events are none the less true.

In the parts of the story into which Anthony Wayne has been drawn, the writer has made use of Spear's "Anthony Wayne," "Anthony Wayne" by John Armstrong (American Biography, edited by Jared Sparks), Palmer's "History of Lake Champlain," and Moore's "Diary of the American Revolution," as well as most of the standard histories of the war for independence.

The many letters he has received from his young readers, and their manifest interest in the struggles of their forefathers to obtain freedom for themselves and their descendants, have been most inspiring. That the younger Americans may be interested in this story also, and that by reading it they may perhaps be induced to prize more highly their own heritage and hold up what their ancestors upheld, is the sincere wish of its writer.

EVERETT T. TOMLINSON.

ELIZABETH, NEW JERSEY.

CONTENTS

I.	THE SWALLOW AND THE GREYHOUND .	1
II.	A MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE .	12
III.	THE MEETING AT THE ELMER HOUSE .	23
IV.	IN THE DARKNESS	34
V.	A RENEWED SEARCH	45
VI.	THE RETURN OF THE QUAKER . . .	56
VII.	A SUBSTITUTE FOR LIGHTNING . .	68
VIII.	A BAND OF "WARRIORS"	79
IX.	A BLAZING PILE	90
X.	AFTER THE FIRE	101
XI.	AN INTERVIEW	112
XII.	A REFRESHING SUGGESTION	122
XIII.	A LIST OF NAMES	132
XIV.	A RACE ON THE BAY	142
XV.	NOAH DARE'S "OBEDIENCE"	152
XVI.	A MEETING WITH ANTHONY WAYNE	162
XVII.	THE CONTEST ON THE GREEN	172
XVIII.	THE VICTOR	183
XIX.	A JERSEY RECRUIT	194
XX.	STARTLING NEWS	206
XXI.	ELNATHAN'S THREE CHEERS	217
XXII.	TAR AND A TORY	228
XXIII.	THE ADVANCE	240
XXIV.	THE CHARMING POLLY	251
XXV.	THE SHORE	262
XXVI.	A WELCOME	273

XXVII.	A DEMAND	283
XXVIII.	REJOINING THE CHESTER COMPANY .	293
XXIX.	NOAH DARE'S ANGER	303
XXX.	IN THE NORTH ☉.	314
XXXI.	A STRANGE GUIDE	325
XXXII.	NOAH'S PLIGHT	336
XXXIII.	CAPTOR AND PRISONER	347
XXXIV.	THE DARING OF ANTHONY WAYNE .	357
XXXV.	RECOGNITION BY THE GENERAL . .	368
XXXVI.	CONCLUSION	380

ILLUSTRATIONS

THE FEARLESS LITTLE BAND HELD ITS GROUND (p. 367)	<i>Frontispiece</i>
AN ASSEMBLY THAT WAS WEIRD AND STARTLING	88
THE MAN'S HAND WAS FLUNG UP	154
EXERTED HIMSELF IN HIS LAST GREAT EFFORT	188

THE CAMP-FIRE OF MAD ANTHONY

CHAPTER I

THE SWALLOW AND THE GREYHOUND

“I THOUGHT you said you knew where every sand-bar in Delaware Bay was?”

“I did say so.”

“What do you mean, then, by running us aground here?”

“This is one of the bars.”

“And you knew it was here?”

“I know it now.”

For a moment Caleb Davis stared blankly into the face of Noah Dare, and then laughed aloud. “I half believe you, Noah,” he said. “It would be just like you to run us aground out here and keep us on this bar till the tide comes in. It would n’t be the first time you have played a trick like that on your friends.”

“Cale, you ’re too lazy to help pole the Swallow, that ’s all the trouble with you.”

“Pole her!” retorted Caleb; “I’ve

broken the only pole you had on your old tub."

"Yes, you don't know much about poling, that 's a fact. If you really want to get off this bar before midnight, I'll tell you what you can do."

"What 's that?" demanded Caleb eagerly. "I'll do it, whatever it is. I don't want to stay out here and freeze."

"Just get overboard and push her off. Oh, the water is n't deep. It won't come much above your knees. It is n't so very cold, either," Noah added dryly, as his friend shivered when he peered over at the waters.

"How do you know it is n't cold?" demanded Caleb.

"Oh, it never is very cold in December."

"I'll tell you what I'll do, Noah," suggested Caleb quickly. "I'll take the tiller and let you do the pushing. I'm not much of a sailor, you know."

"I know that," assented Noah, his eyes twinkling as he spoke, "and you don't suppose I'm going to trust my boat to a lubber, do you? Nay, kind sir, here I stay till the tide lifts us or you shove us off this bar."

“Then I’ll stay with you, Noah,” laughed Caleb. “I always did like to be where you were. I would n’t leave you now — not even for a cup of tea.” As he spoke, Caleb Davis drew his coat more closely about him and seated himself beside his friend, Noah Dare. Early in the afternoon of that day, late in December of the year 1774, they had set sail from Philadelphia in Noah Dare’s fleet little catboat, bound for Greenwich in New Jersey, where Noah’s home was. Caleb Davis, his cousin, had ridden on horseback that morning from Chester, and, agreeable to the arrangement which had previously been made, at the wharf at the foot of Market Street had reported to Noah, who was in waiting there with his trim little craft, the Swallow, the pride of the young sailor’s heart. Caleb’s luggage was speedily placed on board, his horse was stabled in a near-by barn, there to remain until its owner’s visit at the home of his cousin in Greenwich had been completed, when Caleb would return and ride back to Chester.

The December day was unusually mild, and the sail had been enjoyed by both boys until, unfortunately, in the low tide, the

4 THE CAMP-FIRE OF MAD ANTHONY

Swallow had stuck fast upon a sand-bar about three miles from their destination. Caleb's efforts to use the pole had resulted in failure, and the pole itself had snapped in his hands. As a consequence, hope of speedy relief had departed, and if no passing boat should come to their relief, there was slight prospect of their resuming their voyage before the incoming tide should float them once more. And three hours at least must pass before the tide would be in.

Noah Dare had accepted the misfortune in the same indifferent manner in which most of the events in his life had been received. Easy-going, warm-hearted, seldom angered, Noah was likely to deceive a chance observer by his manner. Short, broad-shouldered, muscular, his little eyes twinkling with the spirit of mischief, his apparently unruffled demeanor might easily lead a stranger to believe that Noah was not one to care much for anything, or at least for anything long. But such a conclusion would have been misleading, as Noah's best friends, and his cousin Caleb Davis most of all, well knew. His quiet manner concealed an intensely strong determination,

and in spite of the impression of good nature, which the expression of his face implied, Noah Dare's anger was easily aroused, and once aroused was intense.

In sharp contrast was his cousin, Caleb Davis. There were no freckles on his face, like those to be seen on Noah's countenance, he was at least six inches taller, and his body was thin and wiry. When the boys had gone on their hunting expeditions, as they usually did in the autumn of each year, it was Caleb who led the way on the long tramps, and whose skill in the use of the rifle was their main reliance, for Noah boasted of no prowess as a marksman. On the water, however, it was Noah who was the leader, and the inability of his cousin to learn even the simplest of nautical expressions was a never-ending source of delight to him. Indeed, Noah had repeatedly declared that "Caleb never could tell the difference between a fo'castle yarn and a belaying pin."

The affection between the boys had been exceedingly strong from their earliest days. They had attended the same school in Philadelphia, their vacations had been spent together, and now that both boys

were eighteen years of age, the feeling each cherished for the other, though less demonstrative than when they were younger, was no less strong. Caleb's impulsiveness found its complement in Noah's quiet sturdiness, while the latter's keen enjoyment of a joke was a source of delight to his cousin, who never failed to respond to Noah's droll words and ways.

"What are you looking for, Noah?" demanded Caleb, when the two boys had been silent for several minutes.

"I did n't know but I might see something of Elias and Ananias. They were in Philadelphia to-day, and were going to sail back home. If I could get a sight of their craft anywhere, I'd make them haul us off this bar." As Noah spoke both boys peered eagerly over the water, but not a sight of their friends' boat could they obtain. In the distance they could see a huge sloop, but it was the only sail to be seen upon the bay.

"Noah, I've often wondered where Ananias got his name," suggested Caleb.

"You must n't blame him. There was a good man named Ananias as well as the liar, was n't there?"

“Yes. Which one was he named for?” inquired Caleb.

“I can’t just say,” replied Noah, so soberly that his friend laughed aloud. “Sometimes I think it’s one and then again I think it’s the other. He does tell some pretty good sized stories sometimes.”

Elias Bacon and Ananias Smalley were boys who dwelt at Greenwich, friends and neighbors of Noah and frequent companions of both boys, so that Caleb’s laugh at his cousin’s words was born of his personal acquaintance with the two lads.

“What has Ananias been telling now?” inquired Caleb.

“Cale, do you know the Elmer house?”

“The old house near the dock? The one that” —

“Yes, that’s the one,” interrupted Noah. “Well, Ananias says that the doors of the old house open and shut, and the windows rattle, and great sounds are heard there every night, and yet when anybody rushes in not a soul can be found from cellar to garret.”

“Do you believe it?”

“I don’t know. I’ve never seen it,” said Noah indifferently.

“Noah, let’s stop there to-night and see it! It’s not far from the dock. What do you say?”

“I’m agreed,” laughed Noah. “I’m afraid, though.”

“Afraid! What are you afraid of? This is n’t Salem, I’d have you know! They believe in witches down there, and in whipping Quakers and all sorts of things. But Jersey is n’t as foolish as all that.”

“I’m not afraid of witches. What I’m afraid of is that we shan’t leave this sandbar in time. We’re likely to stay here a while. Cale,” Noah added suddenly, “have you noticed that sloop?” As he spoke the young sailor gazed long at the sail, which now was not far from the place where the Swallow was aground. His companion, too, now watched the sloop, whose actions certainly were puzzling. The sun had been below the horizon for some time, but the course of the boat could be plainly seen. She would stand upon one tack and then suddenly reverse her course, apparently not attempting to make any progress at all. Occasionally the sound of the voices of the sailors came across the water, and even their words could be heard as the sharp call to

come about was given. A half dozen or more times she covered the same course, and at the end was nearly in the same position as when she had first tacked.

“I can’t make her out,” said Noah thoughtfully. “I’ve never seen her before.”

“There are several boats that come into the Delaware which were never here before,” suggested Caleb lightly. “This may be one of them.”

“Yes, that ’s so, Cale,” responded Noah thoughtfully, after another brief silence, during which he had watched the sloop run in closer to them than she had before done, and then abruptly come about and speed across the bay. “Yes, that ’s so. They had some boats loaded with tea that landed in Boston, and some ‘Mohawks’ were there to meet them, too. And they had another down at Annapolis, and the chests caught fire there, too, just the way they were dumped overboard in Boston. They tried it in New York and Philadelphia, you know, but they would n’t even let the cargo be landed in either place. I never could see why the colonists made so much of the Boston tea party and never said a word about what Philadelphia or

New York has done. It seems to me it's better and takes more nerve not to let a ship land than it does to make a great time after she has docked."

"You don't think there's tea aboard that sloop, do you?" laughed Caleb.

"I don't know what she has on board beside her numskull of a captain. He seems to be doing his best either to run her aground or lose his way."

"Maybe he's waiting for somebody to pilot him and the man has n't shown up yet," suggested Caleb.

Noah made no reply as he continued to watch the distant sloop, which had by this time become almost indistinguishable in the dim light. In a brief time, however, she was seen returning on her course and apparently headed directly for the spot where the Swallow was aground. In a few moments, with a great flapping of the sails the sloop once more came about, and at the same time there was a call heard from her deck.

"Ahoy, there!" shouted some one. "Is that Sam McGear?"

"No, it is n't," shouted Noah. Then in a low voice he said to Caleb: "It's just

what I thought. They're waiting for somebody here. That's why she's been standing off and on the way she's been doing."

"They're lowering a yawl," whispered Caleb excitedly. "You don't suppose they're coming here, do you?"

Noah did not reply, as he watched the yawl which now was manned and was swiftly approaching the Swallow. Caleb's query was speedily answered, for the yawl was stopped when it had come within a few yards of the catboat, and the man who was seated in the stern hailed the boys.

CHAPTER II

A MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE

“WHAT boat is that?” demanded the sailor.

“This boat is the Swallow; captain, Noah Dare, of Greenwich,” responded Noah.

“Bound for Greenwich now?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Why don’t you go on then? What are you anchored here for?”

“We’re aground. We’re waiting for the tide.”

“What’s the trouble? Don’t you know the channel?”

“Noah knows every inch of Delaware Bay,” spoke up Caleb. “This bar is one that he has just found. He knew it was here all the time, though.”

The man laughed, apparently relieved by the words he had heard, and, in a tone different from that in which he had first spoken, inquired: “Do you know a man named Sam McGear?”

“Yes, sir,” responded Noah. “He’s one of the best pilots in these parts.”

“He knows Delaware Bay almost as well as Noah does,” suggested Caleb.

Again the man laughed as he said: “Have you seen him this afternoon or to-night?”

“No, sir,” replied Noah.

“He was to pilot us up the bay to Greenwich,” explained the sailor, plainly annoyed by the failure of Sam McGear to appear.

“What sloop is that?” inquired Noah.

“The Greyhound. We can’t wait here much longer. I wonder if one of you could point out the channel for us? Does n’t look as if you knew very much about the course from the way you are stuck fast here,” he added.

“Oh, Noah knows every foot of Delaware Bay,” said Caleb quickly, perceiving in the suggestion a way of escape from the Swallow’s predicament. “He’s sailed it for years. He lives in Greenwich and sails to Philadelphia every week.”

The man hesitated a moment, and then said: “Come aboard with me. I don’t know what the captain will think, but there’s no harm in trying.”

"All right; give us a tow," responded Caleb eagerly.

At the bidding of the man in the stern of the yawl one of the sailors arose and tossed a line to Caleb, who quickly made it fast to the bow of the Swallow, and as the tide had meanwhile been steadily rising, when the men obediently "gave way," the little catboat slid slowly over the bar and soon was in the deeper water. Caleb had quickly lowered the sail and the boat was towed toward the sloop, which was awaiting the return of the yawl.

"This is getting out of our scrape a good deal more easily than I thought we would," whispered Caleb to his cousin.

"I'm not so sure about that," responded Noah.

"Why? What's wrong? You don't think this sloop is" — began Caleb.

"I don't know what to think. Better keep your eyes open and your mouth shut tight, Cale. There's something queer here, but I can't see just what it is."

There was no opportunity for further conversation, as the yawl had now drawn alongside the sloop. From the rail Noah and Caleb could perceive the faces of the sailors

peering down at them, and could hear the captain's query as he said, "Is it McGear?"

The man in the stern of the yawl made a response in so low a voice that the boys could not hear what was said, and their interest was intensified when the sailors clambered up the ladder and held a brief whispered conversation with the captain. That the conversation concerned themselves both Noah and Caleb could perceive, from the frequent glances that were cast at them.

At last the captain hailed them. "We'll take your craft in tow, and both of you come up on deck."

Disinclined as Noah was to heed the call, he nevertheless was persuaded that the wisest course was to obey; and as soon as the Swallow had dropped back to the stern of the sloop and there been made fast, both boys clambered up the swaying ladder and gained the deck. The name of the sloop had been plainly seen, for in ornamental letters the word Greyhound could be discerned even in the dim light. It was manifest, too, that the name was in a measure descriptive of the sloop; for she had been built for speed, and her trim

shape was not more impressive than the great amount of canvas she could carry.

"Who owns that catboat?" demanded the captain, when the boys stood before him.

"I do, sir," responded Noah quietly.

"Where do you live?"

"At Greenwich."

"I hear you've sailed the bay and know every foot of it."

"I know it pretty well."

"Can you show us the channel?"

"Yes, sir."

"All the way to Greenwich?"

"Yes, sir."

"We expected to take on a pilot here, but he did n't live up to his promise."

"Sam McGear has a way of doing that, sir," said Noah quietly.

"I know it now. I wish I had known it before and I'd have saved all this bother," said the captain, in a manner that betrayed his annoyance. "What did you say your name was?" he added.

"I did not say, sir, but my name is Noah Dare."

"And who is this lad?" inquired the captain, placing his hand on Caleb's

shoulder and peering half-suspiciously into the lad's face as he spoke.

"Caleb Davis, my cousin from Chester," explained Noah.

"Does he know Delaware Bay as well as you do?"

"No, sir; I don't know anything about the bay, except where that bar is which we found, and I'm not sure I could find that again," said Caleb quickly.

"You'll do," said the captain dryly. "Now, then," he continued, turning once more to Noah, "if you'll point out the channel and we get safely to the Greenwich dock, I'll see that you have a guinea for your work. That's good pay, and just what I promised this Sam McGear. If you run us aground or try any tricks on us, then I'll" —

The captain did not explain what his implied threat might include, but as his haste plainly was urgent, he at once led Noah from the spot, leaving Caleb to amuse himself as best he might. In a brief time the Greyhound was speeding up the bay before the light wind, and not more than an hour had elapsed before she had arrived at the dock she was seeking. True to his

word the captain rewarded Noah with the guinea he had promised, and even assisted the boys in casting off the Swallow. Noah was convinced from the man's manner that he was as eager for the boys to depart as he had previously been for their assistance, but it was impossible to perceive what the cause of the anxiety was; and without referring to his own suspicions, the young sailor made his catboat fast to the end of the dock, and then he and Caleb started up the street toward the Dare homestead. It was not later than ten o'clock, but not a soul was to be seen upon the street. The houses, too, were dark, and it was evident that the candles had been extinguished, and that Greenwich village was not disturbed either by the arrival of the Greyhound or the return of Noah Dare in his catboat.

"Do we go to the Elmer house to-night, Noah?" inquired Caleb, as the boys opened the gate into the yard that surrounded the latter's home.

"Just as you say, Cale. For myself, I think I've had enough for one day; but if you want to go, I'm your man."

"How about to-morrow night, then?"

“That will suit me better. We ought to be in good trim if we’re going to hear doors slam and windows rattle and all that. For my part, I never thought there was anything in it. Ananias says there is, though.”

“Noah, what do you think that sloop is here for?”

“The Greyhound? Oh, I don’t know. Probably to load up with some stuff the Quakers want to ship. They’re about all the men here that have anything to sell, anyway.”

“Do you think the Greyhound brought any cargo?”

“I did n’t see any. Did you?”

“No. She stood high out of the water and did n’t seem to be loaded much. She could run, if she had to, and there was n’t much of a breeze.”

“She could that,” acknowledged Noah, and the conversation ceased as the boys entered the house and quietly sought their rooms.

At the breakfast table on the following morning, where Noah and his cousin greeted the members of the family, they related their experiences of the preceding

day, and when Caleb told how Noah had been taken on board the Greyhound as pilot, in place of the missing Sam McGear, and how he had safely brought the sloop to her dock in Greenwich, Mr. Dare looked up quickly and said: "What is that? You say you brought a sloop in here last night?"

"Yes, sir; that is, Noah did," laughed Caleb. "I did n't do anything. Noah says I don't know the difference between sailor's yarn and a dress of silk."

"There is no sloop at the dock now," said Mr. Dare quietly.

"What!" exclaimed Noah; "no sloop there? Why we saw her last night and it was only about ten o'clock."

"She is n't there now, whatever you may have seen last night. I went down to the dock before breakfast and there was n't a sign of her to be seen," said Mr. Dare.

Caleb looked up in astonishment at his cousin, who also was plainly puzzled by his father's announcement, and for a time neither of the boys spoke. As soon as they rose from the table they both hastened to the place where the Greyhound had been made fast to the dock, and as they drew

near they were aware that Mr. Dare had spoken truly. The sloop was nowhere to be seen.

“Does n’t that beat the Dutch!” exclaimed Caleb. “Perhaps we did n’t see any sloop, after all. Maybe we just dreamed it. No, I’ll tell you what it was, Noah. It was one of Ananias’s stories; that’s what it was. It was another piece of his story about the Elmer house.”

“There come Ananias and Elias now,” said Noah quietly, as their two friends were seen approaching the dock. With them was a young Quaker of their own age, Elnathan Todd. The last-named personage wore the sombre garb of the Friends, and in spite of the high regard in which the members of the body, to which Elnathan belonged, were held in Greenwich, for Elnathan and his father, Noah, at least, cherished a feeling of suspicion and dislike.

The approach of the three boys was eagerly hailed by Caleb, who was ignorant of his cousin’s prejudice, and as they drew nearer he ran forward to greet them. Elias Bacon, tall, heavy, muscular, and dark, presented a sharp contrast to Ananias,

who was much shorter than his friend, fair-haired and stout, and his bright blue eyes betrayed his impulsive disposition and his keen interest in whatever events the exciting times might afford.

Quietly greeting his friends, Noah turned sharply to the young Quaker and said: "Elnathan, what time did the Greyhound sail?"

For a moment Elnathan gazed at Noah in silence, while a deep red spread slowly over his face. "The Greyhound!" he said at last, in confusion. "What dost thou know of the Greyhound? Does thee think I had anything to do with her coming or going?"

CHAPTER III

THE MEETING AT THE ELMER HOUSE

THE four boys were all gazing in astonishment at the young Quaker, and for a moment there was a tense silence, while the face of Elnathan became even redder than before.

“Did you see her sail?” inquired Noah, again sharply.

“I know the Greyhound is not here,” said Elnathan sullenly. “That is no news to thee.”

“That is not what I asked you,” retorted Noah, winking at Caleb as he spoke.

“I am no early riser,” said Elnathan. “It is only by chance that I am here at the dock now. My father is waiting for *mé* and I must go.”

As the young Quaker passed up the street the smile of amusement on the face of Noah became broader, and turning to his companions he said: “‘Skin a Quaker and you will find a Jew.’ That fellow knows more than he is willing to tell.”

"But what about this Greyhound?" demanded Elias. "I don't know anything about her."

"Did n't you see her last night when you came in from Philadelphia?" said Noah.

"Not a sign of her. What was she, anyway?"

"She's the trimmest sloop I ever saw in my life. Cale and I saw her down the bay last night, and she was waiting for Sam McGear to come aboard and pilot her up the creek."

"She had to put up with Noah, though," laughed Caleb.

"Yes," acknowledged Noah dryly, "that's exactly what she had to do. I brought her up to the dock last night about ten o'clock, and you can all see for yourselves that she is not here now."

"Was she loaded?" inquired Ananias.

"I think she was, but her cargo was n't very heavy, whatever it was. I don't see anything of it hereabout, and it may be she did n't land anything, anyway."

"What do you think she was?" inquired Elias. "We did n't see her; but we got in before sundown, so, of course, we missed her."

“I think she’s the best and the fastest sloop I ever saw. That’s all I know.”

“What made you ask Elnathan if he knew anything about her?” said Ananias.

“Because I wanted to find out; and I did,” Noah added demurely. “You all know that Elnathan’s father, in spite of his smooth ways, has been the bitterest man in Greenwich against the congress that met last fall in Philadelphia, and when a year ago the committee of the Philadelphia people told Captain Ayres to take his ship Polly and his cargo of tea and sail straight back to England” —

“But Captain Ayres was scared and did just what the committee told him to do,” interrupted Caleb. “I know, for Anthony Wayne told me all about it. You know he was one of the ‘Representatives of the Freemen’ of Chester County.”

“So I have heard you remark some score of times. You drag in your Anthony Wayne every time you get a chance,” said Noah. “He must be a wonderful man.”

“He is,” declared Caleb promptly, ignoring the laughter of his friends. “He’s the best looking man you ever saw. He’s

as straight as an arrow and the muscles in his arms are like hickory."

"How do you know?" said Noah, with a twinkle of his eyes.

"I know, for he used them on me once. I'm a member of his company in Chester, and you ought to see us on general training days. Anthony Wayne never lets a man do anything halfway in his company, let me tell you. I've seen him take a man by the shoulders and shake him, as a dog does a rat, if the fellow does n't pay attention. That was the trouble with me," Caleb added demurely.

"He does worse than that, so I have heard," said Elias. "They tell me there are as many bloody noses and black eyes in his company, when he gets through with his drill, as you could find in a regular battle. And Anthony Wayne is the one who does it, too, I understand."

"He is a bit fiery," Caleb acknowledged, "but he does n't ask a man to do anything he won't do himself. There is n't a man in the company that does n't swear by him, too."

"Do they ever swear at him, Cale?" inquired Noah.

"I think not," said Caleb, so solemnly that his friends all laughed.

"What has Friend Todd to do with Anthony Wayne, I'd like to know?" suggested Elias.

"Oh, nothing, nothing at all," said Noah quickly. "The trouble is that whatever you begin to talk about, Cale always winds up with Anthony Wayne."

"I don't either!" retorted Caleb. "But, Noah," he added, "if you could just meet him once" —

A shout of laughter interrupted Caleb, who, in his surprise, turned and stared at the boys, which served to increase their delight.

"Go on with your story about Elnathan's father, Noah," suggested Ananias.

"There's nothing to say, except that he opposed resisting Captain Ayres when he wanted to land his cargo of tea, and he's been on that side ever since. Do you know," Noah added impressively, "I've heard it reported that they drink tea every day at the Todds!"

"We'd dump their tea and the whole family, too, into the Cohansey if we knew that was true, Noah," said Elias angrily.

“Oh, I don’t know it’s true,” said Noah slowly. “I’m just telling you what I’ve heard. Then the way the Greyhound crept up here in the night and” —

“You don’t think she dared bring any tea in here, do you?” demanded Ananias.

“No, I don’t know anything about it,” said Noah. “I just thought I’d try a word on Elnathan, that’s all. Ananias,” he added abruptly, “what’s that story you were telling about the Elmer house? Cale and I almost stopped there last night to” —

“‘Almost’ is all right,” interrupted Ananias. “I can’t imagine you, Noah, ever doing more than ‘almost.’ But what I told you is true, for I’ve seen it myself.”

“Seen what?” demanded Caleb.

“Seen the doors open and shut, and heard the windows rattle, and not a soul in the house, either.”

“How do you know there was n’t?” inquired Noah soberly.

“Because when the men went in they found the house empty.”

“Did you go in?”

“No; I was there, though” —

“You ‘almost’ went in, you mean, I suppose,” said Noah dryly.

"That's about it," acknowledged Ananias, as the boys laughed.

"Now Barabbas was a robber and Ananias was the chief of l——'"

"Quit that!" interrupted Ananias. "You've told that so many times you 'almost' believe what you're saying."

"No 'almost' about it at all, Ananias. I believe every word you say," declared Noah, "and what's more, if you fellows will meet Cale and me to-night we'll go down to the Elmer house and catch the witches at their tricks. What time does the performance begin, Ananias?"

"About nine of the clock. At least, that was the time night before last."

"All right. Will you both stop for us to-night? I'd really like to find out if this Ananias is as good as his predecessor. As far as I'm concerned, I think he is, but I'd like to make sure of it," said Noah dryly.

"We'll meet you," said Elias quickly. "We'll stop at your house for you. I want to see the performance myself."

"I'm agreed," said Ananias. "All I want is to be sure that Noah won't go 'almost' into the Elmer house and then pull back. I tell you it just makes the

shivers creep up and down your back," he added.

"It's your conscience that does that, Ananias," declared Noah solemnly. "That is n't the witches or whatever it is that opens the doors and windows in the old house."

"You wait," said Ananias meaningly. "There are a good many who know more about this than you do, and there is n't a man that can explain it."

Promptly at nine o'clock that evening the four boys departed from Noah's house, without explaining to any of the family what it was they were about to try. When they entered the street that led to the Elmer house, which was located not far from the dock at which they had assembled that morning, they could see that not a star was visible in the heavens. The wind, too, which had risen was chill, and there were promises of snow in the heavy clouds that hid the face of the sky.

"Good night for the witches," suggested Caleb, in a low voice.

"Good night for Ananias, too," said Noah.

"You wait! You just wait, that's all!" retorted Ananias, and in silence the boys

advanced until they had taken a position near the house they were seeking. Not a person besides themselves could be seen on the street, and the house, which for some time had not been occupied, loomed dark and mysterious before them. If any of the boys was fearful he was careful to conceal his feelings, although the manner of all except Noah betrayed the excitement under which they were laboring.

“What are we to do now, Ananias?” inquired Noah, in a low voice.

“Go up and knock on the front door,” replied Ananias.

“All right; come along. No, I’ll go alone. I know how you feel.” And Noah at once advanced to the door, and lifting the heavy iron knocker announced his presence so noisily that the sound was plainly heard by his companions who had remained standing in the street.

Noah waited a brief time, but no response was given to his noisy summons. He could see as he glanced behind him that his friends were excitedly watching him. The whistling of the wind was the only sound to be heard.

Again Noah lifted the knocker and more

loudly repeated his efforts to announce his presence, and before the last sound had been heard the creaking door opened slowly before him. Noah shivered slightly, as he was aware that no person was to be seen — only the dim outline of the wide hall appeared before him.

Summoning all his courage, Noah stepped within, and as he did so the heavy door was closed with a resounding bang that could be heard far down the street. The three boys that had excitedly watched the disappearance of their friend turned eagerly to one another, as Ananias whispered, "There! I reckon Noah almost believes me now."

"We must n't leave him alone in that house," said Caleb excitedly. "Come on! We must go in, too."

"Hold on a bit," suggested Elias hastily, as the form of some one approaching down the street could be seen. Intensely excited now, the boys waited for the newcomer to draw near, and their surprise was great when they perceived Elnathan Todd, the young Quaker, stopping before them, his own astonishment apparently as great as their own.

“Noah Dare is in that house all alone, Elnathan,” said Elias, in a whisper. It was too dark to enable the boys to perceive the expression of anger or dismay on the face of Elnathan, but he said quietly, “Why has Friend Noah gone in there?”

“To see the witches,” began Caleb. “We’re going in, too” —

Caleb stopped abruptly, as the sound of opening windows and rattling shutters could be heard. There was a sound too as of a person crying, as if in pain or distress, and the call seemed to be heard first at one window and then at another near it. It was too dark to permit the boys to perceive how blanched became the faces of their companions, but in a moment Caleb in a low voice exclaimed, “Come on, boys; I’m going in there.”

Without hesitation Elias and Ananias followed him, and together they ran up the steps of the low piazza.

CHAPTER IV

IN THE DARKNESS

THE eager boys were so excited that they failed to observe how their sudden advance affected their young Quaker companion. Elnathan had watched his friends as they noiselessly mounted the steps of the low piazza, and for a moment an expression of dismay spread over his countenance. He acted as if he was about to follow them, and even moved forward toward the house; then abruptly turning about, he fled back up the street. He had not gone far, however, before again he stopped, and after listening intently for any sound that might come from the old house, began to creep stealthily back to the place from which he had fled. Moving quickly across the street, he took a position directly in front of the opened door, and concealing himself behind a huge elm tree peered anxiously out at the scene before him. If the boys had been able to see him, they could have perceived that he was intensely excited, and

that an element of fear was mingled with his interest as he watched and listened for the outcome of his recent companions' entrance into the Elmer house.

Meanwhile the three boys had passed into the wide hall, and there all stopped and listened again. It was too dark to enable any one to see his friends' faces, but the excitement of the moment was so intense that other things were ignored.

"I've never been in this house before," whispered Caleb. "You lead the way, Ananias, and we'll go with you."

"I don't know the place very well, either," responded Ananias, in a hoarse whisper. "We'd better call to Noah, and then we can go where he is."

"Don't you know the way, Elias?" inquired Caleb.

"I have been here, but not lately. I should n't want to fall down any stairs. Ananias is right. We'd better call Noah," replied Elias.

"Elias, you go out and get a candle somewhere," suggested Caleb, unaware that his voice was trembling. "Ananias and I'll look up Noah while you're gone."

"I'll do it," responded Elias, so promptly

that he was gone almost before his two friends were aware of his abrupt flight from the house.

“Now, then, I’ll call,” whispered Caleb, to his remaining companion. “You listen and stand ready to do whatever has to be done. Hi! Noah! Noa-a-h!” he called, his voice rising as he repeated the summons.

Both boys stood listening for their friend’s response, but aside from the loud beating of their hearts and the whistling of the wind under the eaves not a sound could be heard by them.

“Call again, Cale,” whispered Ananias.

“Hi-i! Noah! Noah! Where are you?” called Caleb obediently.

Suddenly from above the stairway before them there came a loud laugh, shrill, prolonged, and repeated before the boys could recover from the alarm which the unexpected and startling outburst had aroused. Instantly both Caleb and Ananias fled through the open door to the piazza, their faces wet with perspiration and their teeth chattering. Unaware of Elnathan’s hiding-place, they were ignorant of the grim smile that appeared on

the young Quaker's face as he observed their precipitate departure from the house.

In a moment, however, both boys had in a measure recovered from their alarm, and stopping on the street and gazing fearfully at the place from which they had fled, Caleb said, "What was that, anyway, Ananias?"

"I don't know. I have n't the least idea. It sounded like"—

"Come on! Let's go back there! I'm mighty glad no one saw us. We've just got to find Noah. I don't believe in witches and such things, anyway."

"I don't, either," responded Ananias tremblingly. "Jersey people are n't such fools as they had in Salem. Come on! I'll go back with you. Wait a minute, though. I'll cut a club here first." Eagerly and with trembling hands Ananias cut a sapling that was growing in the yard, and then with his weapon—a stout stick a yard or more in length—they returned together to the door, which had not been closed after their abrupt flight, and once more they stood together in the hall.

Again they listened for any sound that might be heard, but the silence of the night

was unbroken. The darkness within the house was all about them, and the fear which formerly held the boys once more returned upon them.

“Call again, Cale,” whispered Ananias.

“You call this time, Ananias,” responded Caleb hoarsely. “I could n’t make any one hear.”

Ananias, recalling the response which had greeted his friend’s shout, did not share in Caleb’s feeling, but he quickly responded, peering up into the darkness of the hallway above him as he shouted:—

“Hi there, Noah! Where are you?”

“Here I am,” came an answering word from the head of the stairs. “I’ll be with you” —

There was no mistaking the voice of Noah in the response, but there was a quick interruption that caused the boys in the hall below to dash trembling for the door. Again the weird laughter was heard, and the sound appeared to come from the upper hall, too, though manifestly it was nearer the front of the house than the place where their friend had been standing. Some one, too, was descending the stairs, the boards creaking loudly be-

neath the feet of the fugitive as he leaped down the steps. Precipitately Caleb and Ananias fled to the piazza, but fear for their friend caused them to stop there and turn about to perceive what or who it was that apparently was in pursuit of them.

In a moment Noah joined them, and as both boys became aware that it was he who had rushed so noisily down the stairway they turned excitedly to him, and Ananias said in a whisper:—

“What was that, Noah? What is it?”

“If I knew I should n’t be standing here with you fellows,” said Noah grimly.

“There is something in the old house, after all, Noah,” said Ananias, unable to refrain from rejoicing over his friend in spite of his own alarm.

“There surely is,” admitted Noah.

“But *what* is it? Did you see anything? Could you hear?” demanded Caleb.

“I could hear and I’m going to see,” replied Noah sturdily. “I’m not afraid.” Noah spoke confidently, but neither of the boys was persuaded that their companion was less fearful than were they themselves.

“Elias has gone for a light,” suggested

Ananias. "We'll find out when he comes back."

"I'm going up there now," responded Noah sturdily.

"Wait, wait till Elias comes," said Caleb eagerly.

"I'm not going to wait; I'm not afraid. This is Jersey and not Salem, I'd have you know."

Before either of the boys could protest Noah proceeded up the stairs, his footsteps sounding noisily through the house, almost as if he was striving to maintain his courage by giving warning of his coming.

"Come on, Ananias," whispered Caleb. "We can't let Noah go up there alone."

"I'm with you," responded Ananias feebly.

"No, you stay here," suggested Caleb quickly. "You stay and tell Elias where we are when he comes back. Give me your club and I'll go up there, too." Taking the weapon from his friend's hand, Caleb began to climb the stairway.

"I'm coming, Noah," he called. "I'll be with you in a minute."

"Come on, Cale!" responded Noah. "I'll wait for you. We'll find" —

Noah's words were interrupted by a screech such as Caleb had never before heard. Shrill and prolonged, it seemed at first to Caleb as if it caused his very heart to cease beating. Almost instinctively he leaped back two or three steps, and then the thought of his cousin's peril recalled him to the necessity of going to his aid.

Turning sharply about, he grasped the rail and bounded up the stairway into the darkness. The shrill screech had ceased, and in its place came a voice that manifestly was human, and, if its tones were to be trusted, there was an element of rage and terror as well in the mind of the speaker.

"Yo' le' go me! I done tell Mas' Tom! Yo' hear me! Yo' le' me go! Ah gwine tell Mas' Tom! Yo' le' go me! Le' me go, Ah tole yo'!" The shrill demands were followed by screams that were shriller still, and Caleb, assured now that he was to deal with flesh and blood, leaped eagerly forward.

"Noah! Noah!" he shouted, "where are you?"

"Here I am, Cale."

"Where? I can't see you."

“Feel me, then. I’m right by the rail. I’ve got him now as sure as you are born. No witch about this. Quit your kicking! Hold still now and I won’t hurt you. Ah, none of that! You can’t get away.”

Aware that part of his cousin’s words were spoken to him and part to some one whom he could not see, Caleb rushed forward, guided by the sounds in the darkness.

“Hold on, Noah; I’ll be with you in a minute,” he called.

“Yo’ le’ me go, I’se tellin’ yo’! Yo’ le’ me go! E-e-e-e! Mas’ Tom’ll”—

Caleb was aware that the shrill voice certainly was not Noah’s, and the appeal or demand for release indicated that its owner was in some one’s grasp. In a moment he felt the arm of Noah before him, and then his hand rested upon a head so woolly that he knew a negro was there. Instantly, despite the kicks which he received in his legs, Caleb reached forth and grasped the struggling, writhing body which Noah was striving to hold firmly, and as he did so the screeching was renewed.

“Yo’ le’ me go! Yo’ le’ me go! Ah ain’t

done nothin'! Yo' le' me go! Ah gwine t' tell Mas' Tom, Ah sho'ly is! Den yo' fin' out! Yo' le' go!"

"Come up here, Ananias!" called Caleb. "We've got our hands full."

As Ananias instantly came running up the stairway the prisoner once more endeavored to escape. Writhing, twisting, kicking, butting, the effort of the unseen negro almost succeeded; but as the third member of the party now joined in the contest, the captive was speedily subdued.

"Any more of you here?" demanded Noah of the prisoner.

"Ah ain't gwine tell. Yo' le' me go! Yo' le' me go!"

"There's Elias," said Ananias quickly, as a step was heard in the lower hall. "Come up here, Elias!" he called. "Got your candle?"

"Yes, I've got one," responded Elias. "Where are you?"

"Right up here in the hall. Come up. Be quick, too!"

In a brief time Elias had a light, and then he hastily ran up the stairway, but he stopped when he approached his friends and stared at the sight before him. Held

firmly in the grasp of the boys was a negro girl, apparently about twelve years of age.

“What you doing with that wench?” demanded Elias, in astonishment.

“Bring your candle here,” said Noah.

Elias at once came nearer, and as the light of his candle fell upon the face of the negro girl, now grinning broadly, he said quickly, “Why, that’s Tom Hull’s wench!”

“Ah shore is!” said the girl, laughing loudly.

Before any one could speak, the sound of footsteps in the hall below caused every one to turn sharply and peer at the intruder.

CHAPTER V

A RENEWED SEARCH

THE light of the candle which Elias had placed upon the floor, when he threw himself into the struggle, revealed now a breathless, excited little group that stood waiting for the approach of the one whose footsteps had been heard on the stairway. Even the negro girl had ceased her efforts to free herself, and she apparently was as eager to learn who the approaching man was as were her captors. The newcomer did not falter, and as he came to the top of the stairs the boys beheld Elnathan staring at them.

“Come on, Elnathan,” called Noah, plainly relieved by the sight. “We’ve found the witch. It’s Tom Hull’s wench, that’s all.” Thomas Hull was known in the village as a prosperous man, an outspoken foe to the colonists who were remonstrating against the severe measures the mother country was adopting to repress the rebellious people of the colonies.

His home was in the village of Greenwich, and his position there had been one of influence before he had incurred the opposition of his neighbors by his Tory sentiments.

"What is she doing here?" demanded Elnathan slowly, as he gazed first at the grinning girl and then at the boys.

"She can tell you that better than I can," responded Noah. "Tell him what it is you are doing here," he added, turning to the prisoner as he spoke.

"Ah ain't doin' nothin'," said the girl, grinning broadly.

"What *were* you doing here?" demanded Noah sternly.

"Ah ain't doin' nothin', suh," she repeated.

"Did you open the door?"

"Ah shore did. Ah done open de do'."

"Did you rattle the windows?"

"Yaas, suh. Ah shore did."

"Did you slam the shutters?"

"Yaas, suh." As she spoke the grin on the prisoner's face broadened.

"Did you do all that screeching and screaming?"

"Ah done tole yo'."

“Have you been here before?”

“Ah shore has, suh.”

“And you were the one that has been frightening the people by doing all those tricks in this house?” demanded Elias angrily.

The girl laughed aloud as if the suggestion was highly pleasing to her, and bobbed her woolly head vigorously.

“What did you do it for?”

“Let the wench go,” suggested Elnathan quickly. “She has not harmed thee by her silly pranks. Thee knows she is only silly.”

“Ah is no’ silly, suh!” retorted the girl sharply. “Ah jes’ done what Mas’ Tom done tole me.”

It was manifest even in the dim light that the young Quaker was eager to have the prisoner released, and his very eagerness served to increase the determination of Noah to learn more if possible before he permitted the girl to go free. He did not explain what his suspicions were, however, even to his friends, and as he turned once more to the girl, he said sharply: “What did Tom — what did Mr. Hull tell you to do all these foolish things for?”

“Ah don’ know, suh. Mas’ Tom jus’ tole me.”

“And you don’t know why he told you to come here every night and rattle the shutters and slam the doors?”

“Ah specs, suh, he jes’ want to scare de folks. An’ Ah shore did, suh! De way de folks jes’ cotch der bref an’ run” — The girl broke into a peal of noisy laughter at the recollection, and her young captors looked foolishly into one another’s faces as the truth of her charge became evident even in their own recollections.

“Why did he want to frighten people?” demanded Noah.

“Ah don’ know, suh, ’less ’t was what I tole yo’.”

“Were n’t you afraid to stay here all alone?” inquired Ananias shrewdly.

“Ah was n’t afraid,” laughed the girl. “’T was de folks what come here was afraid. Dey sho’ly was.”

“Did you come every night?” said Elias.

“Ah done come las’ night, an’ Sampson he done come, too, suh,” she added, referring to one of Thomas Hull’s black men whom the boys well knew.

“Why did he come? Was that the only night when he came?” demanded Noah.

“Yaas, suh. Las’ night de only night what Sampson come.”

“Why was he here last night?” persisted Noah.

“Ah don’ know, suh. Ah specs it was ’cause de men” — The negro girl checked herself abruptly and left the sentence uncompleted.

“The men came last night, did they?” inquired Noah quietly.

“Why doth thee not let the wench go?” broke in Elnathan. “Doth thee not see that she is telling thee what is not true?”

“We’ll let her go in good time,” replied Noah quietly. “Now, then,” he added, turning once more to the prisoner, “did those men meet Mr. Hull here?”

“Ah don’ know, suh,” responded the girl, turning her eyes upon Noah so that the whites seemed to glisten unnaturally in the dim light.

“Did you see Mr. Hull here?”

“No, suh.”

“Did you see Mr. Todd here? Was this fellow here, too?” demanded Noah,

placing his hand on Elnathan's shoulder as he spoke.

"Dost thou not see for thyself that I am here now, Friend Noah?" said Elnathan hastily.

"Did you see him here?" demanded Noah again of the girl, ignoring the question of the young Quaker.

"No, suh. Ah can't see in de dark."

"Did you hear him?"

"No, suh."

"Did you stay here all night?"

"No, suh."

"Did Sampson stay?"

"Ah don' know, suh. Ah was n't here as I done tole yo'. How can Ah tell yo' 'bout Sampson when Ah was n't here myse'f?" demanded the prisoner, as her noisy laughter broke forth afresh.

"Friend Noah, I will take her to Friend Thomas and I will tell him of her pranks," suggested Elnathan. "Doubtless he hath no knowledge of her doings and will be grateful when he hath been informed."

"Doubtless, Friend Elnathan," said Noah dryly.

"Do then as I suggest," persisted Elnathan eagerly.

"All right. You take her home," said Noah quickly, greatly to the surprise of his friends.

"It will please me to do so," replied the young Quaker eagerly.

"You go with him," said Noah to the prisoner.

"Yaas, suh."

The girl at once moved toward Elnathan, but the young Quaker still hesitated. "Thou art coming also, Friend Noah?" he inquired.

"Why, you are the one who asked leave to take the wench to Mr. Hull," responded Noah, in pretended surprise. "What do you want me to go, too, for?"

"I do not desire thee to go with me to Friend Thomas," said Elnathan quickly. "I thought thou wert also to depart from the house."

"Oh, we're going pretty soon," replied Noah carelessly. "We may take another look about the place before we leave. We may find another wench hidden somewhere in the house, and Mr. Hull will be glad if we find her for him." As he spoke Noah glanced shrewdly at Elnathan, and the effect which his words produced appar-

ently pleased him, for a smile appeared in the corners of his mouth, but he did not look at his companions to see if they also shared in his feeling.

“I will stay and assist thee,” said Elnathan quickly.

“No. You take the wench back home. If you stay she will stay, too, and we may hear the doors and windows rattling again. You go right on, Elnathan, and we’ll just take a look around the house, and if we don’t find any more wenchies we’ll go home, too.”

Noah could see that the young Quaker was seriously perplexed. It was evident he did not wish to depart and leave the boys in the house, and yet it was at his own request that the black girl had been delivered to him to take home to her owner. Hesitating a moment, Elnathan then said, “I am sure thou wilt not find any more” —

“Probably we shan’t,” interrupted Noah indifferently.

“I do not think Friend Thomas will be pleased to learn that his house here is open and that thou art” —

“Just tell him,” interrupted Noah once more, “that we will see to it that every door

and window is shut and everything will be all right. I give you my word for it."

For a moment Elnathan still hesitated and then, unable to think of any reason for a longer delay, he bade the black girl follow him and at once departed from the house.

Waiting until he was convinced that the young Quaker was really gone, Noah then turned quickly to his friends and said eagerly, "Now we'll search the house."

"Have n't you had enough for one night, Noah?" demanded Caleb. "I am sure I have."

"Afraid, Cale?" laughed Noah. "That is n't the way for a member of Anthony Wayne's Chester County company to talk."

"Anthony Wayne is n't afraid of any one or anything," retorted Caleb warmly, quick to respond to any apparent slight upon his hero.

"Neither are you, Cale. Come on, boys. Unless I'm mistaken we'll find something in this house that will be worth finding. And it won't be such foolishness as witches, either."

"Have we any right to do that?" inquired Elias doubtingly.

“Of course we have,” responded Noah, with all confidence. “No one lives in the house. People have been afraid of it, and we were scared, too, to-night by what we saw and heard. Oh, I cannot tell a lie,” he added with a laugh, as his companions began to protest. “I was scared and so were you, and you know it, every one of you.”

“Speak for yourself, Noah,” suggested Ananias tartly.

“So I shall, and for you, too,” retorted Noah. “Now, boys, we’ll all keep together, but we’ll search the old house from garret to cellar. Come on. Bring your candle, Elias, and we’ll begin with the attic.”

Obediently the boys followed, and up the creaking stairway they made their way to the garret. They seldom spoke as they peered into every closet and continued their search on each floor of the old house. Their efforts to discover anything suspicious were not successful, and at last they came to the door that opened into the cellar. There was a momentary hesitation when they found this door fastened, but at Noah’s word it was broken loose, and then the boys silently stepped upon the

stairs leading to the cellar below. They had not, however, gone far before a low exclamation from Noah, who was leading the way, caused every one to stop, and one quick look revealed to them that their search had now been rewarded.

CHAPTER VI

THE RETURN OF THE QUAKER

“WHAT’S that? Do you see it, boys? Do you know what that is?” demanded Noah, in a whisper.

Holding his candle high above his head, Noah, who was in advance of his companions and farther down the rude stairway, peered with his friends into the wide cellar. Apparently almost the entire space was filled with small chests, which had been carefully packed in regular rows, and the topmost chests were close to the timbers beneath the floor of the room above. For a moment the excited boys stared in silence at the startling discovery they had made, and then in a low voice Ananias said:—

“What do you think it is, Noah?”

“I have eyes and I can see, and I have a nose that can smell. If I was a blind man I’d know this cellar was full of tea.”

“Are you sure it’s tea, Noah?” whispered Caleb.

“Humph!” retorted Noah. “Here, Cale, you hold the candle and I’ll make sure,” he added. “We’ve been fooled by the wench and we don’t want to make any mistake about this.” Placing the candlestick in his cousin’s hand, Noah at once approached the nearest tier of chests, and lifting the topmost box in his hands said quickly, “It’s full, anyway. It smells mightily like tea, too, but I’ll find out for certain. Hold your light a bit higher, Caleb.”

Obediently Caleb lifted the candle, and in a moment Noah had torn open a corner of the chest he was holding and had thrust in his hand. “It’s the stuff, boys, and no mistake,” he added, when he had tasted of the contents. “The cellar is full of it! We’ve seen it and smelled it and tasted it, too.”

““Touch not, taste not, handle not,”” said Elias solemnly.

The tones of the boy’s voice served to relieve the tension of the moment, and all the boys laughed. The excitement of each was strong, and the meaning of the discovery which they had made was clear to every one. Some one, directly against the

command of the assembly, and in opposition to the intense feeling of the loyal Whigs of the colony, had dared to bring tea into Greenwich and store it where it was not likely to be found. What the purpose had been every boy was convinced that he understood, for every one of the four shared in the determination of their elders to have nothing to do with the use of the "accursed stuff."

"What shall we do, Noah?" demanded Elias.

"Nothing now," replied Noah promptly. "The best thing for us is to get out of this house just as soon as we can, and not be seen here, either. Blow out your light, Cale, and we'll all make for the street."

Caleb Davis at once extinguished the light, and then the four boys cautiously moved through the darkness toward the front door, which had been left open. No one spoke as they crept forward, and in a brief time they gained the exit.

"Now, Noah, what shall we do next?" whispered Elias, as the boys halted on the street in front of the old house, which now seemed doubly sombre and forbidding

in the dim light. "We've got to decide what" —

"Sh-h!" interrupted Noah warningly. "Somebody's coming."

Instantly the boys turned and looked in the direction in which their friend was peering, and in a moment the forms of two approaching men could be seen.

"Come on! Let's run!" suggested Caleb eagerly.

"Hold on! Don't do that!" whispered Noah quickly. "A follower of Anthony Wayne does n't want to get shot in the back."

"Never you mind 'Anthony Wayne,'" retorted Caleb sharply. "He does n't run away. It's in the other direction he goes when he runs, I'd have you know. But I don't believe we ought to let anybody see us here. That's what I meant. I'm not afraid."

"We all know that, Cale," whispered Ananias consolingly. "But we've been seen already, and it's too late to leave. If we run now, it'll just show we don't want any one to see us. It'll let the cat right out of the bag."

A warning word from Noah caused his

friends to become silent, and all turned to await the coming of the two men, who were by this time so near that every one of the four boys could see that it was Elnathan Todd, with Thomas Hull, the owner of the old house, before them. The arrival of the two at such a moment naturally increased the excitement of the boys, and though no one of them made the suggestion, it was by common consent that Noah became the spokesman of the party as Mr. Hull and Elnathan stopped before them. Both the newcomers plainly were somewhat excited, and Noah's suspicion that the young Quaker had gone to warn the owner of the place that the boys were investigating the house, was confirmed, although he did not refer to his conviction in the presence of his companions.

"How is this, Noah?" said Mr. Hull, as he and Elnathan peered into the faces of the four boys. "I hear you have been searching my house."

"Yes, sir," replied Noah, endeavoring to speak in such a manner as not to betray his excitement. "We thought you'd be glad to have us find out what made the shutters slam and the doors open, and what made

all those queer noises that have been frightening everybody for the past few nights.”

“Elnathan informs me that you found my wench, Dinah, in there.”

“Yes, sir.”

“She always was a mischievous baggage. Did you send her home?”

“Yes, sir. We told Elnathan we’d let him take her to your house. He wanted to take her, and we thought you would be glad to learn what she had been doing.”

“Thank you. I am glad. I’ll see to it that she plays no more of her pranks in the Elmer house. She’s a saucy baggage. Sometimes I don’t know what to do with her.”

“Did she tell you we were here, Mr. Hull?”

“Why, yes — no — not exactly. It was Friend Elnathan who said to me that you were here and had found the wench. He told me also that you were searching the house to see if you could find any others here. Did you find any?”

“Not a soul,” said Noah quickly.

“Ah, I thought she was the only one to try such tricks.” Mr. Hull laughed lightly as he spoke, and it was evident to Noah

that the man was relieved by the assurance that only Dinah had been found in the house. Noah did not feel called upon to volunteer any explanations concerning the discovery of other things, and it was strictly true that the girl was the only person that had been found in the gloomy old house.

“She won’t be likely to try it again,” suggested Noah.

“That she won’t,” laughed Mr. Hull, “for I shall see to it myself. I am sorry she made such a disturbance, but it will not occur again. I was fearful when you first told me of finding her here that the mischievous wench might have done more than just frighten people by her pranks. But you tell me you did not find anything else in the house that was wrong?”

“She was the only one we saw,” said Noah quickly, “and she’s so black we should n’t have found her in the dark if I had n’t chanced to run against her in the hallway.”

“I am obliged to you, young gentlemen, for what you have done,” said Mr. Hull, as he turned away. “Now that the cause of all the trouble has been found, I don’t

think the old house will disturb any one again very soon. Probably no one will have to disturb it, either," he added casually.

"Good-night, Mr. Hull," called Noah, as he and his friends also turned down the street. He was aware that Elnathan, who had not once spoken throughout the interview, was apparently reluctant to depart; but the young Quaker's hesitation did not cause him to delay, and in a brief time he and his companion had disappeared up the street.

"I tell you what it is, boys," declared Noah to his friends, who at his word had halted, "that man ought to have your name, Ananias."

"I wish he had," retorted Ananias, so earnestly that the boys laughed.

"He certainly is the biggest liar in Greenwich," said Noah warmly.

"You think he knows all about that tea in the cellar?" inquired Elias.

"I don't 'think'; I know he knows. Did n't the wench tell us that he made her do all those tricks? And did n't she say that Sampson came with her, too? And what do you suppose they rattled

those windows and slammed the shutters and did all that groaning for?"

"You think it was all just to scare the Greenwich people and keep them away from the Elmer house? Noah, do you suppose Mr. Hull knew that the tea was in the cellar and had his negroes do all those tricks just to scare folk so that they would keep away from the place?" demanded Ananias excitedly.

Noah laughed lightly as he replied: "You ask too many hard questions, Ananias. How do you suppose I know any more about it than you do?"

"How long has that tea been there in the cellar, Noah?" said Caleb thoughtfully.

"Nobody knows. It may have been three months," suggested Elias.

"I think I could figure just how many hours it has been there," said Noah.

"Hours!" exclaimed Elias. "You don't mean to say" —

"I don't mean to say anything just now; and, boys, that's what every one of us must do. Will you agree not to tell anybody about what we've found out before you see me to-morrow?"

"We can tell our fathers, can't we, Noah?" inquired Elias.

"No. Don't tell anybody till I see you. Good-night," Noah added abruptly.

When Noah and his cousin had proceeded a short distance after the departure of their friends, Noah suddenly stopped and said quickly, "Come on, Cale!"

"Where? What now?"

"Come on! Come on and you'll see," replied Noah.

Puzzled by the unexpected action of his cousin, Caleb nevertheless turned and obediently followed Noah, who was running swiftly back in the direction from which they had just come. However, instead of following the street to the Elmer house, Noah darted into the vacant lots on the opposite side, and then, warning his cousin to follow his example, crept forward through the darkness until he had gained the shelter of the great elms that were growing there.

"Take your place behind that tree, Cale," whispered Noah, pointing, as he spoke, to an elm four or five yards distant from the one that sheltered himself.

"What for?"

“To keep a watch on the front of the house.”

“But I don’t see” —

“Never mind what you don’t see! Just keep your eyes open and wait for what you may see, that’s all.”

“You think Elnathan and Mr. Hull will come back?” whispered Caleb, as a sudden explanation of the strange actions of his cousin presented itself.

Noah, however, did not respond, and Caleb at once took the position which had been assigned to him, and in silence the two boys watched the front of the old house across the street. The hour was late for the quiet village of Greenwich, and most of its inhabitants were in bed long before this time. Not a person could be seen upon the street, and the branches of the great trees as they were swept by the gentle wind that was blowing made the only sound which could be heard. The sound itself was weird and mournful, and aroused in the mind of Caleb, at least, a recollection of the exciting experiences of the night, which, despite his efforts to be brave, were somewhat disquieting. Noah he could see was standing almost as motionless as

the great trunk behind which he was concealed. An hour passed before the silent vigil was interrupted, and Noah stealthily crept from his hiding-place to the tree where Caleb was maintaining his watch.

CHAPTER VII

A SUBSTITUTE FOR LIGHTNING

“No use in staying here any longer,” declared Noah, in a whisper.

“Let’s go home, then,” responded Caleb. “I have had all I want.”

As the boys stepped forth from behind the great tree, Noah suddenly clutched the arm of his cousin and quickly drew him back into the shelter as he whispered excitedly, “See that, Cale! They’re here, as sure ’s you ’re born!”

Instantly Caleb again darted behind the tree, and both boys peered across the street at the sight which now could be seen. A man had just emerged from the doorway of the old house, and, standing for a moment there, had gazed first up and then down the street. Apparently satisfied that no one was near, he then turned to some one within the house, and was speedily joined by a second man, who was seen to come out from the hallway, and taking his stand beside the first man that had been

seen, peer eagerly about in every direction. Apparently satisfied by his investigation, he had then spoken a few words to his companion in so low a voice that neither Noah nor Caleb could hear what was said, and then both men departed, going swiftly up the rambling street without once glancing behind them.

“Who was that?” whispered Caleb excitedly, to his cousin.

“A blind man would know ’t was Elnathan Todd.”

“Was it Mr. Hull with him?”

“It was n’t anybody else. I knew they’d both be here, though what I can’t understand is, how they got into the house. They certainly did n’t go in by the front door.”

“Maybe they used the back door,” suggested Caleb.

“You ’re a wise man and no mistake, Cale,” retorted Noah, laughing lightly as he spoke. “The main thing, though, is that they have been here, just as I thought they would.”

“What shall we do now?”

“Go home,” replied Noah abruptly.

The two boys at once started down the

street toward Noah's home, walking rapidly, and neither of them referring to the exciting experience of the evening. In a brief time they arrived at the gate into the yard, and as they approached the house Noah stopped abruptly as he said:—

“There's a light in my father's room, Cale. Perhaps something is wrong.”

“What will he say to you for being out till after eleven o'clock?”

“I don't know. I'm not very badly scared, for I reckon he knew a bit about what we were up to. At any rate, I told him. Come on, Cale, and we'll find out what he has to say, anyway.”

As the boys drew near the piazza they were startled as the door before them opened and Mr. Dare was seen holding a candlestick in his hand to light the way for some one who was standing beside him. Both men evidently were deeply in earnest, and were still conversing in low tones. The sound of the approaching footsteps of the boys caused Mr. Dare to lift the light in his hand and gaze sharply at the newcomers, but as soon as he recognized Noah and Caleb he turned again to the man beside him and said, “Well, I bid

you good-night. Shall I see you before you return to Philadelphia?"

"I think not, as I shall depart early in the morning."

"I am glad you told me what you did. I shall see that it is looked into, and if anything is discovered I'll see, too, that you are informed."

"Thank you, Mr. Dare," replied the stranger. "Good-night," he added, as he shook hands.

"Good-night, sir; good-night," responded Mr. Dare.

As soon as the visitor's steps were heard on the gravel walk, Mr. Dare turned to the boys, who now had mounted the steps of the piazza, and said, somewhat sternly, "You are very late, Noah. Where have you been?"

"Come inside, pop! We've something to tell you," replied Noah quietly.

Without another word Mr. Dare closed the door (doors were seldom locked or even bolted, in the time of this story), and reëntering the room placed the candle upon a table and looked keenly at the two boys standing before him.

"It's all right, pop," began Noah con-

fidently, "at least, it's all right as far as Cale and I are concerned. I don't know what you'll think of some others, though." And then Noah related the story of the exciting events of the evening, not omitting the account of the return of Elnathan Todd and Mr. Thomas Hull to the Elmer house after the departure of the boys from the place.

Mr. Dare listened quietly and without once interrupting Noah until the story had all been told. Then he said quietly, "Sit down, boys." As soon as the boys had seated themselves and Mr. Dare also had taken a chair, he continued, "Did you notice that man who was leaving when you came home?"

"Yes, sir," replied Noah.

"Did you know who he was?"

"No, sir."

"He was one of the committee of safety from Philadelphia. He came here to inquire if we had seen anything of a sloop named the Greyhound."

"Did you tell him?" inquired Caleb eagerly.

"I did. He went on to inform me that she had acted in such a strange manner

that it was suspected she had a cargo of tea on board."

"She did!" said Caleb quickly.

"It does look like it," acknowledged Mr. Dare. "The rascals ought to know better than to try to land the stuff here," he added.

"That tea ought to be treated the way the cargoes at Boston and Annapolis were," said Noah warmly.

"I'm not sure you're not right, my boy," responded Mr. Dare.

"And Tom Hull"—began Noah again.

"Who?" interrupted Mr. Dare sharply.

"Mr. Thomas Hull," said Noah, slightly confused by the implied rebuke, "and El-nathan Todd, too, ought to be treated to a coat of tar and feathers. The idea of their daring to bring in a cargo of tea here, right here in Greenwich!"

"I'm not certain they would venture to claim that the tea was theirs," suggested Mr. Dare dryly. "If they did, they would be bolder than the Greyhound, and what the sloop did beats anything within my recollection."

Noah could perceive that his father, in spite of his quiet manner, was angry at

the very boldness of the landing of the tea in Greenwich, and his own excitement increased as he became aware of his father's feeling.

"It's all there. It's all stored in the cellar of the old Elmer house," said Noah eagerly. "We saw it. We saw it with our own eyes, did n't we, Cale?"

"We did," responded Caleb promptly.

"Are you positive the men that came out of the house were Thomas Hull and Elnathan?" inquired Mr. Dare quietly.

"We know it!" exclaimed Noah.

"I have had my suspicions of Elnathan's father, but I did not believe Tom Hull would be in such a deal," said Mr. Dare thoughtfully.

"They won't dare come out and claim it, anyway," suggested Caleb.

"They may not have to do that," responded Mr. Dare. "It may be that the cargo does n't belong to them, anyway. The sloop may have run into the Cohansey and stored the tea in that cellar until such a time as it will be safe for her to come back and get it. Thomas Hull and Elnathan's father may not own a chest of it."

"What are they so interested in it, then,

for?" demanded Noah. "What did Tom Hull" —

"Who?" interrupted Mr. Dare quickly.

"I mean Mr. Thomas Hull," laughed Noah. "What did Mr. Thomas Hull, Esquire, have his negro wench go into the house and do all those pranks for, unless he really meant to scare folk and keep them away from the place? And what did he want to keep people away for, unless it was that he had, or planned to have, something there he did n't want anybody to see?"

"I have no doubt that both men are implicated," acknowledged Mr. Dare. "I am not sure, however, that either of them owned any of the tea. I can hardly believe that, in the present state of feeling of our people. But that does not mean that they may not have been employed by the East India Company, and are looking after the tea. It is quite likely, too, that they may have had some understanding with the company, and provided a place where all the chests might be stored. That might be the explanation of all these foolish tricks of Tom Hull's negro wench."

"I wish the lightning would strike every chest!" exclaimed Noah fervently.

“So do I,” assented Mr. Dare lightly. “In that event no one would have any damages to pay.”

“Do you think either Mr. Thomas Hull, Esquire and Tory, or Friend Todd, Quaker and traitor, would dare claim any damages?” demanded Noah warmly.

“I should hardly think they would,” laughed Mr. Dare. “Well, boys,” he added, as he arose, a hint which both boys instantly followed, “we ’ll have to see what can be done. The tea is n’t likely to run away, or be struck by lightning to-night, and the Greyhound is under the suspicion of the committee, so she will not come back for her cargo right away.”

“Not unless she runs up the Cohansey in the night — the way she came,” suggested Noah, as he and his cousin departed from the room. To Noah’s suggestion his father made no response, and both boys at once withdrew to their room. There Noah was silent until he and Caleb were in bed, and even then he did not speak before a quarter of an hour had elapsed.

“Asleep, Cale?” he called at last.

“Not yet.”

“I have it all fixed.”

“Have what fixed?”

“That tea.”

“What about it? How are you going to ‘fix’ it?”

“We ’ll make a bonfire of it.”

“What?” demanded Caleb excitedly, as he partly rose in his bed and peered across the room at the bed in which his cousin was lying.

“I mean just what I say. If Boston can pitch a cargo of the stuff overboard into Boston harbor, and the men at Annapolis can get rid of the tea that was forced on them, I don’t see why Greenwich can’t have a bonfire. The tea does n’t belong to anybody,” added Noah dryly. “There is n’t a man in the village who would dare say it was his; and if nobody owns it, who’s going to make a fuss if the chests all go up in smoke? There is n’t a man in Greenwich that will dare say he’s anything but glad of it. And Tom Hull will be the noisiest of the crowd, too.”

“What ’ll your father think about it?”

“You heard him say he wished the lightning would strike it, did n’t you?”

“Yes,” replied Caleb dubiously. “But a bonfire is n’t lightning exactly.”

“It’s better,” said Noah positively. “It will do the work all right and won’t harm a thing except the tea, and lightning might hurt somebody. See?”

“All right,” responded Caleb quickly. “I’m ready for it if you are.”

“Keep still for a minute and I’ll tell you all about it,” said Noah glibly, as he began to unfold his plan to his cousin.

CHAPTER VIII

A BAND OF "WARRIORS"

"THERE will be four of us to begin with, Ananias and Elias and you and I," explained Noah. "And every one of us can get five fellows to join."

"I don't know about it, Noah," replied Caleb dubiously. "We can"—

"Of course we can," interrupted Noah quickly.

"What will your father say about it?"

"We won't say anything to him. I don't believe he'll care, anyway. You heard what he said to-night?"

"Yes, I heard him. But there's a sight of difference between having the tea struck by lightning and setting fire to it ourselves."

"No difference in the end. It's burned up either way, is n't it?"

"That may all be," responded Caleb, still not entirely convinced. "But I am afraid of trouble. Don't you think it would be better to speak to your father about it

first? He does n't like the tea being here any better than you and I do."

"Oh, I don't want to bother him with it," said Noah lightly. "He has enough to worry about without this. Besides, he won't know that we did it, anyway."

"Yes, he will. Everybody 'll know it. There will be a crowd there inside of five minutes if we have a bonfire. I believe if there was a fire right out in the middle of Delaware Bay at midnight there 'd be a crowd around it before it was fairly started."

"That's all right, Cale," laughed Noah. "I think there would be a crowd on hand, too. But we shan't mind a crowd you see, and the bigger it is the better it will be for us."

"I don't see how it will be. Somebody will be sure to know us."

"No, they won't."

"I don't see how you 'll help it."

"Because they won't be able to tell one fellow from another."

"Why, Noah, it 'll be as light as day. That tea will burn like old hay and there 'll be a blaze that will light up the whole town."

"That 's just what we want!" said Noah eagerly. "But the light won't make any difference. Nobody 'll know us even if it is as light as day."

"Why not?"

"Because we 'll all be dressed up as Indians, that 's why."

"'Indians!'" exclaimed Caleb, leaning forward as he spoke and peering excitedly at his friend. "'Indians!' What do you mean?"

"Just what I say. Did n't the Boston men disguise themselves that way? Of course they did, and we can do it, too! Anthony Wayne would do it if he was in our place, Cale, and if he was here you would n't draw back a step, you know you would n't."

"I don't know what Anthony Wayne would do."

"Well, I do. It would be just the kind of a deed he 'd like. And I tell you, Cale, we've just got to do something. The idea of the Greyhound bringing that cargo right in here under our noses! And then think of what Tom Hull has been doing, and Elnathan Todd, too! You heard what my father said, and what that man, who 's

come all the way from Philadelphia just to find out if it was true the sloop had dared to run up the Cohansey and bring her cargo here, said, too; did n't you?"

"Yes, I heard them," replied Caleb, who was now beginning to share in the excitement of his cousin. "How do you propose to do it, Noah?"

"Why, it 'll be as easy as running aground in the bay with a lubber at the helm. To-morrow morning you and I will see Elias and Ananias the first thing we do, and we 'll make out a list of the fellows we want to go in with us. Of course we 'll have to be careful, for we don't want any one to join that we can't depend upon. We 'll have some one keep watch all day at the Elmer house, to see that no one carries the stuff away, though I 'm not very much afraid of that in the daytime" —

"Perhaps they 'll get it out of the house to-night, Noah," broke in Caleb, who by this time was as eager for the project as his cousin.

"I 've thought of that," responded Noah, "and I think I 'll go down there pretty soon myself, and keep a lookout on the old place. But first I 'll go on and explain

what my plan is. To-morrow morning, as I said, we 'll see Elias and Ananias the first thing and decide on the fellows we want. I 'm inclined to think we don't want any one but boys and some of the younger men, and those that we know, too, to go in with us. Then we 'll appoint different ones of us to see these fellows and tell them what we 're going to do. They 'll have to get up their disguises during the day, and then we 'll decide where we are to meet and just what every one is to do. See, Cale?"

"Yes, I see."

"Then I think I 'll get up now and go down to the Elmer house and keep a watch on the place. I think everybody in our house is asleep by this time."

"I 'll go with you, Noah!" exclaimed Caleb quickly, as he sprang out of bed.

"No, Cale. You stay right here. One can do all that 's to be done, and there is n't any use in your going. I 'll be back here before anybody is up, and you 'll be all the better for a good night's sleep. To-morrow night you may not get very much, you know."

As Noah insisted upon going alone, his cousin agreed to remain where he then

was, although he was eager to share the vigil. In a brief time Noah crept noiselessly out of the house, and Caleb again sought his bed. It was long, however, before sleep came to the excited boy. Several times he was confident that he heard the returning steps of Noah on the gravel walk in front of the house, but every time he found that he was deceived. The long hours passed slowly for the waiting Caleb, but at last he fell asleep, and was not even awakened by the stealthy return of Noah, who crept into the room and hastily climbed into his high "four poster" bed just as the dawn began to appear in the eastern sky.

When Caleb at last awoke it was broad daylight, and he could see that his cousin was in the other bed. Hastily dressing, he did not disturb Noah, although he was eager to learn what the results of his vigil had been; and quietly descending the stairs he ate his breakfast with the family, and was not a little relieved when his aunt explained Mr. Dare's absence from the table by saying that he had unexpectedly departed for Philadelphia and might not return to Greenwich until the following day.

The absence of Mr. Dare was somehow a relief to Caleb, and as Noah's mother gently said that "Noah was tired" and that "she would not disturb him" — a declaration she would have been less likely to make had the young gentleman's father been present — he departed from the house as soon as he had eaten his breakfast and hastened to the old Elmer house.

Not a person was to be seen near the place when Caleb arrived. The shutters were all closed, and there was nothing to indicate that the house was not deserted. Caleb walked up and down the street several times, and then returned to his cousin's house, where he discovered Noah seated before the breakfast table. Mrs. Dare, however, was also in the dining-room, personally attending to the wants of her boy, who winked solemnly at Caleb as his mother repeatedly expressed her sympathy for him because "he must be tired or he never would have slept so late in the morning." Caleb looked out of the window and laughed, for he was well aware that if Mr. Dare had been at home one sharp call from the foot of the stairway would have banished all of Noah's "weariness" and

caused the lad promptly to respond to the summons.

It was not until Noah had finished his breakfast and the two boys had withdrawn to the barn that Caleb was able to satisfy his curiosity.

“Noah, did you see any one? Did you find anything wrong?” he demanded eagerly.

“Not a thing. There was n’t a soul that came near the place all night.”

“That’s good. Now, what shall we do next?”

“Get Elias and Ananias.”

“I’ll go and get them,” said Caleb quickly. “You’re tired. Your mother says you are, and I reckon she knows.”

“My mother is a good woman,” responded Noah soberly. “All right, Cale; you go for the boys and I’ll rest up here. Come back just as soon as you can, for we’ll have plenty to do to-day.”

Caleb at once departed on his errand, and fortunately finding each of the two boys he was seeking at home, he speedily returned with them and rejoined Noah, who was found “resting” on the hay beneath the rafters of the barn.

Apparently completely restored, Noah hastily arose as his friends appeared, and briefly explained his project to them. Startled as both Elias and Ananias were by the plan, it was not long before they were sharing in Noah's enthusiasm, and declared themselves ready for the task. A list of their friends upon whom they might rely was carefully made, and then the boys separated, each to explain to the list which had been assigned him what the project was to be. Every one was to be pledged to secrecy and was to provide his own disguise, and at three o'clock that afternoon all were to assemble in the woods near the "swimming hole" in the Cohansey, where final arrangements for the night were to be made.

At the appointed time and place every one was present, and after a full discussion it was agreed that they should assemble at eight o'clock that evening in Noah's barn and then together advance upon the Elmer house.

Promptly at the hour agreed upon all the boys were on hand, bringing their disguises in bundles which were carried under their arms. There was manifest a feeling

of tense excitement, and the boys were unusually subdued and quiet as they donned their somewhat startling garbs. Noah, who was the natural leader of the band, quietly gave his directions, and frequently made suggestions concerning some changes that to him seemed desirable in the garb of his companions.

At last all declared themselves to be ready, and the dim light of the lantern revealed an assembly that was weird and startling. There were twenty in the band, some with the feather head-dress of the Delawares, some with false scalps into which long feathers had been thrust, while the face of every one was stained a dark red, and brilliant-hued daubs of war paint had been smeared upon cheeks, chins, and foreheads. Long leggings also adorned the person of every warrior, and the disguise was declared to be complete when two of the "warriors" were led to the line and expressed their inability to declare who the most of their disguised companions were.

There was a brief delay while Noah selected two of the band, who were to take positions in the street, one above and one



AN ASSEMBLY THAT WAS WEIRD AND STARTLING

below the Elmer house; those who were to heap the chests together on the open ground in front of the house, where the bonfire was to be made; and every other member of the party was to assist in bringing forth the tea from the cellar where it had been stored, and carry it swiftly to the common pile on the vacant lot.

At last, when every direction had been given, Noah declared the time for action had arrived, and quickly the boys fled from the barn and together began to run swiftly toward the Elmer house.

CHAPTER IX

A BLAZING PILE

THE excitement of the band as it proceeded up the quiet street was intense, although not a word was spoken as the boys followed Noah Dare, who was marching at the head of the line. If any one had misgivings, he endeavored to quiet them by persuading himself that he was doing no more than the men at Boston and Annapolis had already done. The destruction of property which the project involved was justified by the fact that by the expressed sentiments of all the colonies the tea never should have been brought to America, and the very fact that it had been stored secretly in a place where precautions had been taken to frighten any chance visitors, was of itself sufficient to indicate that the owners were aware of the questionable character of their operations.

The more immediate problem of the young "warriors," however, was that of avoiding all interruptions until the bon-

fire they were planning to make had been accomplished. Accordingly they moved swiftly along the street, and not a soul had been seen when the band arrived in front of the house which was to be their destination. Then a halt was made, and at a word from Noah the two guards quickly took the positions to which they had been assigned. It was Noah himself who then mounted the steps and attempted to open the front door. He discovered that it was securely barred, and that some other means of entrance must be obtained.

“Come on, Cale,” he called eagerly, in a low voice. “We’ll have to get in by one of the windows.”

Caleb quickly responded to the call, and as the two boys darted around a corner of the house he said, “This is almost like housebreaking, Noah.”

“Too late to stop for that,” replied Noah curtly. “We must have that tea now. Here, give me a lift and I’ll try this window.”

Caleb at once stooped, and grasping his cousin by the knee lifted him until Noah was easily able to test the window from which one of the shutters was blown back.

The sash at first resisted his efforts to raise it, but by shaking it sharply he was able to remove the stick which had been placed as a brace, and in a moment he had clambered into the room and dropped upon the floor.

“Go around to the front, Cale, and tell the boys I’ll open the door for them,” he whispered, and then noiselessly dropped the window into its place and withdrew from the sight of his cousin.

Without delay Caleb ran swiftly back to rejoin his waiting comrades, and just as he ran up the steps of the piazza the door before him was opened and Noah himself appeared.

“Now, boys,” began the leader quietly, “every one of you knows just what he has to do, so take your places and we’ll begin.”

Instantly the boys responded, and a line was formed reaching across the street to the lot where the chests were to be placed in a pile. To Noah and Caleb had been assigned the task of entering the cellar and bringing the chests up to that part of the line which extended into the house. A candle had been brought by the leader, and this was at once lighted and so placed

that its light enabled the boys in the cellar to see about them.

“You stand on the cellar steps, Cale,” suggested Noah, “and I’ll toss the chests up to you, and you can pass them on to Elias, who’ll be the first of the line. He’ll stand right at the head of the stairs.”

The leader’s suggestion was at once acted upon, and the work was begun. As fast as Noah passed the chests to Caleb his cousin in turn passed them to Elias, and in this manner there was very little confusion in the work. Not a word was spoken as the boys, all intensely excited now, busied themselves in the task. The chests were comparatively light, and the well-organized plan by which they were to be taken from the cellar worked admirably.

The guards that had been stationed in the street did not once call during the transferring, and when an hour had elapsed the entire work had been accomplished.

When Noah appeared from the cellar his face was streaming with perspiration, but his manner was apparently as calm as if what he had been doing had not in any way violated the law of the land.

“Go out into the street, boys, and wait for me in front of the house. I’ll bar the front door and come out through the window. We must leave everything in the house just as we found it.”

“Except the tea,” suggested Elias dryly.

“Yes, except the tea,” said Noah.

As soon as the boys had departed Noah quickly closed and barred the door, and then returned to the window, extinguished the light of the candle and slipped to the ground, carefully closing the window behind him. He then ran across the street to the spot where he could see his assembled comrades, and as he joined them, he said:—

“‘So far, so good,’ boys. Come on now and we’ll” —

“Ssh!” whispered one of the warriors.
“There comes Ananias.”

Instantly all became silent and turned to watch their companion, who could be seen running swiftly to join them.

“What is it? What ’s wrong, Ananias?” demanded Noah quickly.

“There ’s somebody coming! There he is, right over there, now!” replied Ananias, as excited as his friends.

“Who is it?” said Noah.

“I don’t know. There ’s only one. Shall we drive him away, or wait to see if he notices us first?” responded Ananias.

The boys were all motionless, and as they were standing close to the trees they were hoping that the approaching man would pass without observing them. Every eye was fixed upon the man on the opposite side of the street, and the excitement among the watching boys became more intense when he stopped directly in front of the Elmer house and at first seemed to be about to go up the steps.

“See who it is?” whispered Caleb to Noah, clutching his cousin by the arm as he spoke.

“Yes. It ’s Elnathan Todd.”

Neither spoke again for a moment, as all the boys excitedly waited to perceive what the young Quaker would do. It was later than people ordinarily appeared upon the streets of Greenwich, and the presence of Elnathan at such a time was consequently the more mysterious. To the consternation of the band Elnathan now turned about and stood peering first up and then down the wide street; and just as the boys

began to hope that they were to escape his notice the young Quaker spied them.

Startled by the sight, he at first seemed to be about to run from the place, but in a moment, apparently thinking better of his plan, he boldly advanced directly across the street and approached the place where the boys were standing.

“Ssh! Don’t run! Stay right where you are! Don’t say a word! Let me do the talking,” whispered Noah to his fellows; and then turning sharply, he found himself face to face with Elnathan Todd.

The young Quaker was plainly startled as he became aware of the numbers and the garb of the band before him, and apparently he was hesitating as to whether or not it was wise for him to remain there. He glanced nervously up the street, but still did not offer to flee. For a moment no one spoke, and then Elnathan said sharply, “Will thee tell me what this means?”

“How-ow-ow-ow-ow!” began Noah suddenly, and instantly the shout was taken up by his comrades. “How-ow-ow-ow-ow-ow-ow!” yelled the boys together, some of them at the same time brandishing the

tomahawks they had brought with them and advancing upon the young Quaker. Plainly Elnathan was startled by the unexpected outburst, but he did not retreat from his position.

“I know not what foolishness this is,” he said, his voice trembling in spite of his evident attempt to conceal his alarm.

“How-ow-ow-ow-ow!” responded the warriors threateningly.

“I will say to thee one thing,” said Elnathan, sturdily facing the warrior who was nearest him, “I know that whatever may be the folly or the wickedness thou art plotting, that Noah Dare and Ananias Smalley are in this mischief. There is never a deed of naughtiness done in Greenwich that those two are not concerned in it.”

“How-ow-ow-ow-ow-ow!” yelled the warriors, although from one or two there came sounds strongly resembling a snicker.

“What is that yonder?” demanded Elnathan suddenly, as in the dim light he perceived the great heap of the chests of tea. As the young Quaker spoke he turned as if he were about to approach the pile. But as by one purpose the band instantly

began to press upon him and the principle of non-resistance apparently reasserted itself with great vigor; for bestowing one glance of terror upon the threatening actions of the "warriors," he abruptly turned and fled down the street in the direction from which he had come, followed by a wild whoop of derision from the entire band.

Hastily turning to his companions, Noah said, "Come on, boys! We have n't a minute to lose! Elnathan will be back here before we know it, and he won't be alone, either!"

Obediently the whole company ran swiftly to the place where the chests had been piled. There were no directions given now, and none was required, for flint and tinder were quickly produced, and in several places at the same time a fire was kindled in the heap. No one knew just who were engaged in this duty, nor did any one in the excitement stop to inquire. In a moment the entire mass was in flames, and the purpose for which the young warriors had come had been accomplished.

"Had n't we better leave now, Noah?" whispered Caleb to his cousin.

“No. We might as well be ‘hanged for sheep as for lambs.’ Besides, we don’t want to let the fire scatter any.”

“Do you think Elnathan did really know you?”

“I don’t know and I don’t care,” answered Noah recklessly. Then, turning to his comrades, he said in a louder voice, “We’ll have a war dance. Join hands, all you fellows, and we’ll have a ring here!”

Instantly the boys obeyed, and though the fire was too large to permit of their encircling it, they formed a ring at one side and with wild whoops and yells began their dance. In a moment Noah began to sing, and his comrades instantly joined in the song which at the time was popular throughout the colonies:—

“Then join hand in hand, brave Americans all,
 By uniting we stand, by dividing we fall;
 In so righteous a cause let us hope to succeed,
 For Heaven approves of each generous deed.
 In freedom we ’re born, and in freedom we ’ll live;
 Our purses are ready,
 Steady, friends, steady,
 Not as slaves, but as freemen our money we ’ll give.”

Faster and still faster danced the excited “warriors,” and louder grew the wild song.

“Another verse, Noah,” called some one, and instantly the leader began again, the boys all joining with a louder response.

“All ages shall speak with amaze and applause
Of the courage we ’ll show in support of our laws;
To die we can bear — but to serve we disdain,
For shame is to freemen more dreadful” —

Suddenly the song was hushed and the startled boys were gazing at the cause of the interruption, which had appeared in the street immediately behind them.

CHAPTER X

AFTER THE FIRE

RUNNING swiftly toward the blazing pile came Elnathan Todd and by his side was Thomas Hull, the latter wheezing and puffing from the violence of his exertions and the excitement under which he was laboring. The sight of the two approaching men had been sufficient to check for the moment the wild dance of the "warriors," and the entire band stood silent and motionless as the boys waited for the blast which they were confident would be forthcoming.

"You rascals! You villains!" shouted Thomas Hull, as he stopped in front of the band and shook his fist at the assemblage. "What does this mean? You shall pay dearly for this, every one of you! I know you! I know every one of you! Give me your names this instant!"

"There is n't any use in giving you our names," said one of the "warriors," "for you know already who we are." The voice

of the speaker sounded very like that of Elias Bacon, but as the disguise was still worn it was difficult even for the excited man to distinguish one of the band from his fellows.

“You broke into my house!” shouted the infuriated man.

“Who did, Mr. Hull?”

“All of you! Every one of you!”

“You are mistaken, Mr. Hull. Only four of us have been inside the house this night,” responded another of the “braves,” and this time the voice strongly resembled that of Noah Dare.

“You burned all the tea!” again roared the man.

“Was the tea yours, Mr. Hull?” inquired the “warrior” who had last spoken.

“It does n’t make any difference whose it was!” shouted Thomas Hull, now almost beside himself with rage. “You have destroyed property! You have broken into a house! You have — you have” — The man’s voice seemed to fail him, and he shook both fists at the band in a manner that appeared to delight every member. A shout of derision greeted the response which one of the warriors made as he said,

“You are right, Mr. Hull! We have! We have!”

“S-s-s-h!” warned one of the band. “Don’t be disrespectful, boys. Here come some more. Look at them! They’re coming from every direction!”

For a moment no one spoke, and even Thomas Hull and his young Quaker companion turned to perceive who the newcomers were. Across the vacant lots, from up the street, as well as from the opposite direction, men and boys and even a few women could be seen running swiftly toward the blazing tea. The excitement could be plainly discovered on the faces of the approaching people as they came within the circle of light, and in a moment the leader of the band again broke into the song which had been interrupted by the approach of Thomas Hull and Elnathan Todd. Wildly dancing and flinging their arms about as they once more began to leap and shout, the words of the stirring song only added to the excitement.

“This bumper I crown for our sovereign’s health,
And this for Britannia’s glory and wealth;
That wealth and that glory immortal may be,
If she is but just and we are but free.

In freedom we 're born and in freedom we 'll live,
 Our purses are ready,
 Steady, friends, steady,
 Not as *slaves* but as *freemen* our money we 'll give."

"You 'll give your money, and mine, too!" shouted Thomas Hull, as there came a momentary break in the song at the end of the stanza.

"You know us, don't you, Mr. Hull?" called one of the band derisively.

"Yes, I do. I know every one of you!"

"Who are we?"

For an instant Thomas Hull turned to Elnathan, and the young Quaker could be plainly seen as he replied to the evident query of his companion. Then once more angrily facing the band, the man said, —

"Noah Dare, Caleb Davis, Ananias Smalley, Elias" — A loud shout interrupted the recital, and the "warriors," who again had ceased dancing, stood facing the little assembly and together shouted: "Whose tea is this? Whose tea is this? Whose tea is this?"

As only a loud laugh from the assembly greeted the query, the boys varied their question and again demanded as they

shouted together: "Whose tea was this? Whose tea was this? Whose tea was this?"

"It does n't make any difference whose it was!" shouted Thomas Hull, as now, furious with anger, he faced the assembly. "This is an outrage! These lawless persons have destroyed property of the value of many pounds! They have broken into my house" —

"Burn the Tory's house, too!" interrupted some one in the assembly. "'T would serve him right! Hiding his tea in his own house!"

"Hi! Hi-i-i-i!" shouted some of the "warriors," in response to the suggestion, and a rush toward the house across the street was begun. It was checked, however, by the energetic words and actions of the one who appeared to be the leader of the "Indians," and the alarm of Thomas Hull, which under other circumstances might have been amusing, was speedily relieved.

Some of the boys who had been drawn with their elders to the spot when the alarm of fire had first been given were now manifesting their own intention to share in the excitement, and were beginning to

cast stones into the burning mass and scatter the glowing embers. Their attempts were promptly checked by the actions of the "warriors" themselves, who seized the culprits and cast them back within the encircling lines of the spectators, whose sympathies were all with the burners of the tea, if their jeers and cries were true manifestations of their feelings.

The shouting, dancing, and singing continued until the fire burned low, as it speedily did; and as if some perverse spirit animated the "warriors," not one fled from the field. Doubtless the friendly expressions of the assembled spectators encouraged them in their mad prank, and as Thomas Hull no longer shouted his protests, his silence was looked upon as the removal of the last vestige of opposition.

At last when the mass of tea chests had all been consumed and only the charred embers remained upon the ground, the "warriors" seized branches of trees and together advanced upon the smoking remains, and fiercely began to beat all about the place. In a brief time the last sparks of fire had been extinguished and the conflagration was ended.

The band of "warriors" then gathered together, and turning to the spectators shouted in unison: "This is the way the man who dishonors the colony of the Jerseys and the village of Greenwich shall be treated! Long live the king! Death to the tea drinkers! Down with the Tories! How-ow-ow-ow-ow-ow!"

With a final prolonged yell the "Indians" then turned and together ran swiftly up the street, until they disappeared from the sight of the assembly.

On the outskirts of the village the band halted, and Noah said: "Now, boys, the best thing for us to do is to scatter and make for our barn."

"Noah," inquired Caleb, "did you see your father there?"

"Where?" demanded Noah quickly. "No, I did n't see him. Where was he?"

"I'm quite sure I saw him in the front row just before we left. Did n't any of you see him?" Caleb demanded of his companions.

Not one of them, however, had perceived Mr. Dare in the assembly, and Noah said: "You must have been mistaken, Cale. My father has gone to Philadelphia."

“That does n’t mean that he can’t come back, does it?” demanded Caleb. “Perhaps he was n’t there, though I was sure I saw him. What would he say to you, Noah, if he knew you had a hand in this?”

“What will Thomas Hull say? you’d better ask,” spoke up Elias Bacon.

“We know already what he said,” suggested Ananias dryly. The boys all laughed at their companion’s demure words, but there was evident a feeling of uneasiness. Now that the prank had been performed and the excitement of the moment was gone, a reaction had come in the feelings of the “warriors,” and the possible consequences which were still to be faced were not to be ignored.

“Can’t be helped now,” declared Noah stoutly. “We’ve done it and it can’t be undone. The only thing for us to do now is to see to it that Ananias does n’t talk too much” —

“You need n’t be afraid of my talking,” interrupted Ananias quickly. “It’s what the other fellows will say that you need to look out for.”

“Tom Hull, for example?” suggested one of the boys.

“Yes, and Elnathan more than any one else,” declared Ananias.

“How would it do for us to scare the sneak? We might fix him so that he’d be glad to promise not to open his mouth,” suggested Elias.

“Too late now. I don’t believe Tom Hull will talk very much,” declared Noah positively. “The less he says the better it will be for him. He saw how the men there at the fire took what he did say. No, fellows, the one thing for us to do now is just to do — nothing. If Ananias does n’t talk I don’t believe there’ll be anything said or done either after a day or two. Of course, for a little while the fire will be the talk of the town, but it won’t burn much longer than the tea did if you don’t feed it.”

“Don’t stand here any longer or Elnathan Todd will find us,” suggested Elias.

“All right!” replied Noah. “Cale and I’ll go ahead, and the rest of you better scatter so that you’ll come by twos to our barn.”

The two boys instantly turned into the pasture that was near, and by a circuitous way arrived at the barn where the disguises

had been donned. Then Noah quickly lighted the candles in the lantern he had left there, and he and Caleb at once began to remove their savage garb.

In a brief time their companions appeared, coming by twos as Noah had suggested, and when he and his cousin were clothed in the garments in which they were wont to appear, not one of their comrades was missing. Every one declared that he had successfully avoided discovery, and had neither seen any one nor been himself seen as he had fled across the lots.

In spite of Noah's words of caution, the boys were not able to dress in entire silence, and when some one would repeat the frequent query as to what was likely to be done by the authorities, there was some one to reply in unnecessary boldness that "nothing would be done and no one need be afraid." In spite of the declaration, however, there was a manifest feeling of anxiety among the boys; and when at last the door of the barn was opened, and after Noah had extinguished the light of the candle they silently and stealthily departed for their homes, there was not one who was not more fearful than he was willing

to acknowledge to his friends, and perhaps even to himself.

In silence, after they had watched the departure of their comrades, and then had carefully fastened the door of the barn, Noah and Caleb quietly walked to the kitchen door. To their surprise they discovered Mrs. Dare there, plainly awaiting their coming, and as soon as the boys entered she said quietly, "Your father is waiting for you and Caleb, Noah. He is in his library, and three men are with him."

"Who are they?" inquired Noah quickly.

"Mr. Thomas Hull and Elnathan Todd and his father."

CHAPTER XI

AN INTERVIEW

STARTLED as the boys were by the announcement of Noah's mother, they nevertheless went at once to Mr. Dare's library. There their misgivings were in nowise lightened when they perceived the three visitors. In the dim light Noah could see the expression of triumph on the face of the young Quaker, but he himself in a measure succeeded in controlling his own surprise, and his face betrayed neither alarm nor consternation at the discovery of the presence of the men whom of all the Greenwich people it is certain he was least desirous of seeing at that time.

A brief silence followed the entrance of Noah and Caleb, and then Mr. Dare said quietly, "Mr. Hull, here are the boys. You may ask them what you please."

"I'd like to know," began Mr. Hull promptly, his anger betraying itself in the loudness of his tones, "by what right a

parcel of vagabonds set fire to the property of other people.”

As Noah appeared to be the one to whom he addressed himself, that young gentleman at once responded, speaking in a low voice as he said, “I think that is perfectly natural, Mr. Hull. Nobody will blame you.”

“‘Blame!’ ‘Blame’ me!” retorted Thomas Hull sharply. “I should say not! I am not the one to be blamed.”

“Then you did n’t know anything about the tea, after all?” said Noah demurely. “That’s about all one can tell by what people say. I’m glad to hear that you did n’t have anything to do with the stuff that was hidden in the old Elmer house. Some people were unkind enough to say, just because it had been stored in the cellar of a house which you happened to own, that the tea must be yours or that you knew all about it. That’s just about as much as you can tell from the speech o’ people.” Noah had glanced at his father while he was speaking, and the smile he had seen in the corners of his father’s mouth had encouraged him to assume a bolder manner than otherwise he would have dared,

and perhaps his manner was bolder than the true feeling in his heart at the time.

"I did n't come here to discuss the ownership of that tea. I came to talk about the vagabonds who burned it."

"Yes, sir," responded Noah demurely.

"What have you to say for yourself?"

"What have I to say?" Why, Mr. Hull, I have n't anything to say."

"That's just what I thought!" retorted the man triumphantly. "You own up to the part you took, do you?"

"Why, Mr. Hull, I don't own up to anything."

"You set fire to that tea!"

"Did I?" inquired Noah, so innocently that Caleb laughed.

"Yes, you did! First you stole it and then you burned it."

"Did the man that owned the tea say that?"

"It does n't make any difference who owned it!" declared Mr. Hull angrily. "I am not talking about that. You set it on fire, now did n't you? You and the nineteen others that were with you."

"I'll tell you what I'll do, Mr. Hull," said Noah quickly. "If the man, or the

men," he added, as he glanced significantly at the two Quakers in the room, "who owned that tea will come to me, I'm perfectly willing to tell them all I know about it. I don't say that I know very much, but what little I may happen to know I don't intend to tell to everybody — not even to you, Mr. Thomas Hull, unless you are the one who had the Greyhound bring her cargo up the Cohansey. Are you?"

"I know who owned it."

"Who are they?"

"I'm not at liberty to state."

"Nor am I at liberty to state what little I may know except to the responsible parties."

"You were seen in the Elmer house — more than once, too," said Mr. Hull loudly.

"Who saw me?" demanded Noah sharply.

"Elnathan."

"Did you see me in the house, Elnathan?" demanded Noah of the young Quaker.

"Yea, I saw thee; and I saw others also," responded Elnathan viciously.

"Yes, I was in the house," acknowledged

Noah slowly. "There were several others in there, too, at the same time."

"Who?" demanded Mr. Hull eagerly.

"Let me see: I was there, that 's one; Elnathan Todd was there — he makes two."

"Thou knowest I was there to spy thee out," broke in Elnathan angrily. "I had nothing to do with thy thievish designs."

"Why, Elnathan!" said Noah, so demurely that Caleb laughed again and Mr. Dare turned his head away quickly as if he were trying to hide the expression on his face. "You don't mean to say that you were just a sneaking spy, do you? Were n't you as much afraid of the witches as we were, and did n't you go in just to find out what it was that was taking place in the old house? I'm sure that's what we went in for, did n't we, Cale?" he added, turning to his cousin.

"That 's right!" responded Caleb promptly, "and that 's what Elnathan said he went in for, too."

"So I did," retorted Elnathan quickly, "but" —

"You hear what he says, Mr. Hull. Elnathan confesses that he was one of the band," Noah hastily declared. "Why

don't you ask him all about it? He owns up to what he's done. As far as I know he's the only one that has."

"Thou knowest as well as I that my son Elnathan had no part nor lot in this matter," said Friend Todd, in his deepest tones.

"Why, Mr. Todd, he just said he did," replied Noah simply.

"I can tell thee, Noah Dare, I know the name of every one," said Elnathan.

"Do you, indeed?" answered Noah, "who were they?"

"I have no need to tell thee!" responded Elnathan glumly.

"But I'd like to know. And, say, Elnathan, did you find out who owned the tea? I fancy there are men here in Greenwich who would like better to have you find that out for them than they would even to know who set it on fire or who drove the wenches — witches I mean — out of Mr. Thomas Hull's house. From what some of them said to-night I have an idea there would be livelier doings than a bonfire of tea chests could ever bring."

"I did not own the tea, Friend Noah," declared the young Quaker.

“I never thought you did, Elnathan,” laughed Noah. “You’re not old enough to ‘own’ anything in your own name. How about your father and Mr. Thomas Hull here? Did they own any of it?”

There was a brief and awkward silence for a moment, and then Mr. Hull said: “It matters little who the owners of the cargo were. The thing that interests you most, young man, is who the incendiaries are. As far as I am concerned I don’t mind telling you that I did n’t own the tea.”

“Not any of it, Mr. Hull?” interrupted Noah quickly.

“You heard what I said,” retorted the angry man.

“Yes, sir, I heard what you said. Did you or Friend Simeon Todd own anything in the cargo? Did either of you know the Greyhound was to come here? Did you tell any one that the tea could be hidden in the cellar of a house you owned? Did you or Friend Simeon Todd enter into any agreement about that cargo of tea? Were you to be paid” —

“You are an impudent young puppy!” broke in Mr. Hull, no longer able to restrain his feeling of anger. “If you were

my boy I would take a strap to you. And what is more I cannot understand how your father is able to sit quietly by and let you be so disrespectful to your elders and he not even making a single protest. In my day young puppies were taught better!"

"I did n't know you ever were a young puppy, Mr. Hull," said Noah dryly.

"Noah!" said Mr. Dare sternly, speaking for the first time during the interview.

"Sir?" responded Noah.

"You must beg Mr. Hull's pardon instantly."

"Yes, sir. Mr. Hull," said Noah, turning and bowing to the offended man, "I said you were a young puppy. I am sorry for it."

A snicker from Caleb caused Mr. Hull to turn angrily upon Mr. Dare, and in tones that could have been heard throughout the house (and doubtless were heard, for Noah's mother and his sisters were not far away from the room, we may be sure) he said: "Joe Dare, this is the first time I ever have been insulted in your house! And you sit calmly by and let this — this — young — young" — another snicker from Caleb caused the excited

man to change abruptly the word he was about to use — “this young man to be disrespectful to his elders.”

“Did he not say to you he was sorry?” inquired Mr. Dare gently.

“Sorry for what? Sorry for what?”

“For what he said.”

“No, sir! That is not what he said! He said he was sorry that I was a young puppy.”

“Mr. Hull, what did you want me to say?” inquired Noah. “You would n’t want me to say I was glad, would you? You tell me just what you want me to say and I’ll say it.” Noah’s manner was so thoroughly respectful that Mr. Hull could only glare at him in response.

“Come, Friend Thomas,” suggested Simeon Todd. “We will go to thy home. It is evident that Friend Joseph is upholding his own son in his naughtiness. These are evil days that have fallen upon us.”

“Stop a moment, my friends,” said Mr. Dare. “What I told you was that I would call the boys and you could question them yourselves. Have I not done so? Have you asked all the questions you desire?”

“Humph!” retorted Mr. Hull, as he

turned toward the door, followed at once by the two Quakers.

As soon as the owners were gone Mr. Dare turned to the boys and said, "This is a serious matter, Noah."

"Yes, sir."

"Why did you do it?"

"Why did they bring the tea up the Cohansey and land it right here under our very noses?" responded Noah earnestly.

"Two wrongs have never yet made a right."

"Do you think the Boston men did wrong? Was it wrong for the men at Annapolis to do what they did? I have heard you say you did n't think it was," urged Noah.

"It seems to be a different matter when it happens right at home," replied Mr. Dare quietly, though there were traces of a smile to be seen in his face. "Right or wrong, I am confident we have not seen the end of it. Good-night to you, boys."

As Noah and Caleb lighted a candle and climbed the stairway to their room, neither spoke, although both were aware that a new aspect of the escapade was now certain to appear.

CHAPTER XII

A REFRESHING SUGGESTION

ON the following morning, when Noah and his cousin took their seats at the breakfast table, both boys were made aware of the feeling of anxiety that was manifest. Throughout the meal it was seldom that any one spoke, and then it was only in few words.

“Caleb, did you say you were going home to-morrow morning?” inquired Mr. Dare, when at last his wife and daughters departed from the room.

“Why, no, Uncle Joseph!” replied Caleb in surprise. “Do you want me to go home?”

Ignoring the manner of his nephew, which seemed to imply that Caleb was confused by the implied suggestion, Mr. Dare said, “And did you say, Caleb, that you wanted Noah to go back with you?”

“You know I’d like to have him go with me,” responded Caleb, as he perceived that Noah was winking at him.

“Very well, then. I give my consent. Noah may go with you, since you are so eager to have him.”

“How long am I to stay?” inquired Noah.

“That depends,” replied Mr. Dare. “If I shall need you here at any time I can send you word. Ordinarily you are in no haste to come back to Greenwich. I do not think you will be needed at home right away. I think I may say to you that you can stay as long as you desire, unless you receive word to the contrary.”

“That is just what I want.”

“Did you say you planned to sail directly after breakfast to-morrow morning, Caleb?” inquired Mr. Dare, as he arose from his chair and started from the room.

“Yes, sir, that’s just when we’ll start,” said Noah quickly.

“Very well, then, I’ll not say good-by to you till then. I shall doubtless be busy to-day, and I may not see you before to-morrow morning.”

“What does it mean, Noah?” demanded Caleb, when the two boys were left to themselves. Caleb plainly showed that he felt

hurt by the evident purpose of his uncle to cut short his visit at Greenwich.

“‘Mean,’ Cale?” laughed Noah. “Can’t you see?”

“No, I can’t see, unless he is tired of having me here and thinks it would be better for me to go home. Maybe he does n’t think my influence is good on you, Noah.”

“You’re as blind as a bat,” laughed Noah. “Why, all my father wants is to get us both out of town for a few days till this affair has blown over. I know he is n’t worried about your having a bad influence on me. If it were your father, Cale, who was worrying, there might be some reason in it.”

“I believe you are right, Noah,” said Caleb quickly, the expression of his face lighting up instantly. “He is afraid of what may be done here in Greenwich and he wants us both out of the way.”

“You can see through a barn door if there is a hole in it.”

“Yes, but I had n’t once thought Uncle Joseph could be scared and would want us to run away.”

“You don’t call going home ‘running

away,' do you? My father is n't afraid of Tom Hull or those sneaking Quakers either. I have an idea, though, that he is a bit fearful of what we might do. You know, Cale, how easily I am influenced, and you might get me into another scrape if we don't get out of Greenwich pretty soon."

"Uncle Joseph ought to have asked me if I was n't going home to-day, then," remarked Caleb, as he and his cousin departed from the dining-room.

"Noah," called Mr. Dare, as the boys stepped out on the piazza, "I want you to go out to the farm and take a message to Dan."

"Yes, sir," replied Noah respectfully, at the same time bestowing a glance full of meaning upon Caleb. The "farm" was nearly five miles from Greenwich, and "Dan" was the negro who was in charge.

"Tell Dan that I have changed my mind and that he need not drive any of the stock into town to-day," continued Mr. Dare.

"Yes, sir."

"And, Noah, if Caleb wants to go with you he may do so. You can use any of the horses you wish."

"All right. Do you want us to start now?"

"Yes, I think so. There is no need of haste, still it would be better to tell Dan now, so that he won't be making any mistake."

"Was he to drive the cattle in to-day?" inquired Noah innocently.

"He was told to bring them in," replied Mr. Dare quietly, a faint trace of a smile appearing upon his face as he spoke.

Without any further delay the boys at once proceeded to the barn, where two horses were saddled, and the young riders prepared to depart.

"I tell you, Cale, my father knows a thing or two," laughed Noah, as he and Caleb turned into the street. "He did n't want to tell us to keep out of the way, but he let us know what he wanted just the same."

"That's just what I'm willing to do, too."

"Cale, if I go home with you I'll see Anthony Wayne, won't I?"

"That's what you will, Noah!" responded Caleb eagerly. "He's worth seeing, too, let me tell you."

"What does he look like?"

“He’s tall and straight as a pine tree. He has black hair and a pair of eyes that can look right into the marrow in your bones. He’s as quick as a flash, and there is n’t a man in our company that he can’t throw. You ought to see him when some fellow does n’t do what he has told him to do. Not much like your Tom Hull or your Quaker Todds, Noah.”

“Why? What does he do?”

“He just makes the man do what he’s been told, and he does n’t beat about the bush any, either.”

“Does the gentle Anthony lay hands on the man?”

“He does that, and if his hands are n’t enough he’ll lay anything he can grab, too.”

“I don’t think I should like to be in his company.”

“Yes, you would, Noah; yes, you would. Everybody likes him.”

“Does the man that Anthony grabs like him, too?”

“Yes, sir. He likes him best of all.”

“That may do for your Pennsylvania men, but I don’t believe the Jersey men would stand for a thing like that.”

“Yes, they would, Noah! You would,

anyway. You could n't help liking him. His voice is pitched high, and when he calls on his men for something it just makes you tingle all over. You think that's the very thing you'd rather do than anything else in the whole world."

"That's the way you may feel about it, Cale; but it does n't strike me that I'd have any such feeling."

"Oh, but you would, Noah; you could n't help yourself," protested Caleb eagerly, for, as we know, he never tired of singing the praises of the man who was destined to become one of the most dashing of all the American leaders.

"Tell me more about him, Cale."

"Why, you know already what there is to tell, or if you don't I'm sure the fault is not mine. When he left school, or soon after, he started out with a surveying party for the wilderness" —

"What wilderness?" interrupted Noah, as demurely as if he never before had heard the story.

"Why, Pennsylvania, of course."

"That's so, I might have known. Pennsylvania is a wilderness, is n't it?"

"It is n't so bad as Jersey," protested

Caleb quickly. "You know that as well as I."

"Go on with your story, Cale," interrupted Noah laughingly, for his cousin never failed to respond to his prodding.

"I've heard him tell a great many times about his experiences in the woods — how he had to fight Indians and shoot the painters and bears and wild cats" —

"I thought you said he went out there to survey," broke in Noah.

"So he did. He did that and all these other things, too."

"Smart man," remarked Noah soberly.

"He is that. He was only twenty years old when Ben Franklin sent him up to Nova Scotia to survey the land his company had bought there, and he had to keep the settlers in order, too. And he did it."

"So I have heard you say. What does this paragon of all the virtues do now?"

"He does most everything. He's a member of the county assembly for one thing, and since the meeting of the Continental Congress there is plenty to be done. Then he has his company to drill" —

"That's enough to keep him busy," broke in Noah, with a laugh.

“He’s been simply fierce ever since the Polly tried to land her cargo of tea last year. She did n’t land it, though. The Greyhound did, you’ll have to acknowledge that. The Jersey men were n’t smart enough to head her off.”

“Never you mind that. It would have been easy to drive her off, but when she lost all her cargo — why, that puts the Jersey men ahead, does n’t it?”

“How does it?”

“Why, that tea has gone up in smoke, that’s all. Your Polly could take her cargo off to some other port, but the Greyhound won’t ever bother anybody again with the stuff she had on board. The Jersey men fixed that for her.”

“And got themselves in a fix, too, at the same time.”

“That remains to be seen. Look behind you, Cale, and see who that is that is following us.”

Startled by the unexpected request Caleb glanced quickly behind him, and in a moment exclaimed, “There are three of them.”

“Who’s in the middle?”

“It’s Elnathan Todd!” exclaimed Caleb,

“and that’s Ananias and Elias with him! What do you suppose it means?”

“You know as much about it as I do. Shall we pull up and wait for them?”

“Yes! Yes!” said Caleb eagerly.

Instantly the two boys drew rein on their horses, and turning about peered at the approaching party. All three were on horseback, and it was manifest that Caleb had spoken truly when he had declared that the young Quaker was in the centre, and on either side of him were the two friends of Noah and Caleb. The surprise of the latter was increased when it was seen that Elnathan’s bridle was being held by Ananias, and when the trio halted before their friends the expression upon their faces clearly betrayed that something was wrong.

CHAPTER XIII

A LIST OF NAMES

“WHY did n’t you stop, Noah, when we called to you?” demanded Elias, when the five young men were together in the road.

“Did n’t hear you,” retorted Noah. “Why, Elnathan, what’s the trouble?” he added demurely, as he faced the young Quaker. “Lost some more tea?”

Elnathan scowled as he replied: “The tea concerns thee more than it does me.”

“Oh, I’m not concerned, not in the least,” said Noah lightly. “My father did not lose any money in that bonfire.”

“I tell thee, though, he may lose something more than tea.”

“What’s that?”

“He may lose his son.”

“I’m not lost if you mean me, Elnathan,” laughed Noah. “You can see for yourself that I’m not lost. I’m right here.”

“What made thee run away?”

“I did n’t run away. I’ve nothing to run from.”

“Did not the sheriff come for thee this morning?” demanded Elnathan, in evident surprise.

“He did not,” replied Noah slowly. The words of the young Quaker were startling, and despite his apparent indifference Noah was made somewhat uneasy by them, as well as by Elnathan’s manner.

“Why did thee ride away directly after breakfast?”

“How did you know I did?”

“I saw thee.”

“Ah, still playing the spy! Boys, how is it that a spy is treated? Have any of you a strap with you?” demanded Noah quickly of his companions. The face of Elnathan instantly became pale, and in evident alarm he glanced at the boys. His bridle, however, was still held by Elias and escape was apparently impossible.

“We found him out on the road,” broke in Ananias. “We went up to your house, and your mother told us that you and Cale had started for the farm. We overtook Elnathan back here about a mile, and he said he was looking for you. We told him he would n’t find you where he was, but that he would if he would come with us,

for we were looking for you, too. He did n't seem to want to come a bit; but we persuaded him," Ananias added demurely, glancing at the rein in the hand of Elias as he spoke.

"Friend Ananias, thee made me come. Thee knows thee did," said Elnathan solemnly.

"Did we?" replied Ananias soberly.

"Elnathan, did you come out here just to tell me the sheriff wanted to see me?" inquired Noah.

"He does want thee. I advise thee to go back."

"I'm going back — when I've done my errand here."

"I advise thee not to delay."

"That's good of you, Elnathan. I don't think I ever saw a more thoughtful fellow than you are. You are thinking of us most of the time, are n't you?"

The young Quaker scowled but made no reply.

"Come on, boys," called Noah. "We'll make a break of it for the farm and then we'll go back, so that if the sheriff wants to ask us just what it was Elnathan was doing in the old Elmer house the other

night, we'll be on hand to tell him all about it."

"I shall not go with thee," said Elnathan angrily.

"Oh, yes, you will. You just can't tear yourself away from us, Elnathan," laughed Elias, as his own horse started forward, and at the same time the young rider yanked the bridle of the horse which the young Quaker was riding.

"I tell thee to let go!" shouted Elnathan fiercely. "I will not go with thee! It would shame my father's good name for his son to be seen in thy company. Jail" —

Whatever it was that Elnathan was about to declare he abruptly ceased, for Ananias had suddenly given the young Quaker's horse a vicious cut from behind, and the startled animal leaped forward so quickly that the bridle-rein was lost by Elias.

"Take after him!" called Ananias sharply. "Get him! Chase him! Don't let him get away! We must n't lose him!"

Instantly the four boys started their horses into a swift run and began the pursuit of the fleeing Quaker. Elnathan had not been able to grasp the rein when his horse had plunged forward, and now he was

lying low on the horse's neck, frantically endeavoring to regain his lost control and at the same time retain his seat in the saddle. His broad-brimmed hat had been lost, the long tails of his coat were flapping like wings, and if his pursuers had not been so eager to overtake him the ludicrous sight would have sent them into roars of laughter.

As it was, however, every boy was riding swiftly, and in a brief time Noah and Ananias had gained on Elnathan and passed him in the road. As soon as this had been accomplished both boys turned their horses about, and with Elnathan between them and their friends it was an easy matter to check the speed of his horse, and Ananias soon was holding the Quaker's bridle again, and Elnathan was riding in the midst of the little band. His face, however, did not indicate that he was enjoying either the position or the experience, for he was angry, and like some angry persons he had lost control of himself.

"I will have the law on thee, Noah Dare!" Elnathan shouted. "Thee are a highway robber! 'T is bad enough for thee to set fire to property, but I tell thee

this will be the worse for thee! Thee have held me up in broad daylight! Thee are” —

“That’s all right, Elnathan,” interrupted Noah smoothly. “I know just how you feel. I’ve often felt that way myself. Now, you sneaking spy, if you’ll give me that list of names you have in your pocket, we’ll let you go!”

For an instant Elnathan stared blankly at Noah and then the flush slowly faded from his face.

“W-w-what list does thee mean?” he stammered at last.

“You know what I mean,” retorted Noah sternly. “Let me have it.”

“I will not let thee have it!” shouted the young Quaker. “Thee does not know that I have any list. Thee are — are a — a son of Belial” —

“Hold his horse’s head, Elias,” said Noah calmly, as he leaped to the ground.

“Hold my horse, too,” he added, as he tossed his bridle to his friend. “Now then, my gentle, inoffensive, peaceful Quaker spy, will you give me that list or shall I take it from you?” said Noah, turning fiercely upon Elnathan. “I know your creed is for you to give me the list when I

ask for it, and some other things, too, that probably are in those pockets of yours, just the same as you do when your 'enemy compels you to go with him a mile and you go with him twain.' Let me have it!"

For a moment the young Quaker gazed wildly about him, seeking some way of escape, but apparently finding none he said tremblingly: "Thee will give it back to me, Friend Noah?"

"Let me have it!"

Elnathan slowly drew a paper from his inner pocket and handed it to Noah, who took it, and after carefully scanning its contents began to read aloud to his companions: "Ebenezer Elmer, Richard Howell, Joel Fithian, James Ewing, Andrew Hunter, Philip Fithian, John Hunt, Clarence Parvin, Henry Stacks"¹ —

The reading was interrupted by an exclamation of rage from Elnathan, who suddenly leaned low and snatched the paper from Noah's hand. At the same moment

¹ The list of the names of the twenty young tea burners is remarkable for the number of those who afterward became prominent. One became a governor of the State, several were well-known clergymen, others became prominent as physicians, one was father of the chief justice of New Jersey, and indeed all the members of the young band were sterling and true-hearted.

he yanked the bridle from the grasp of Ananias, and with a savage call to his horse instantly started up the road at his swiftest pace.

“Stop! Stop! Elnathan” — began Elias, as he instantly prepared to start in pursuit of the fleeing Quaker.

“No! No, Elias! Let him go.” called Noah, who had not even made a movement toward his own horse. “We don’t want him any more.”

“Why not?” demanded Elias, nevertheless stopping his horse. “Are you afraid?”

“Not a bit,” responded Noah. “But the fellow is no good to us.”

“He has that list all right,” suggested Ananias. “How did you know he had it, Noah?”

“I did n’t know. I only guessed at it.”

“’T was a good guess.”

Noah laughed as he said, “I’m sorry for you, boys.”

“You’re in the same box,” retorted Elias.

“No, I’m not. I’m going to leave.”

“‘Going to leave!’ Where are you going?”

"Caleb is very anxious to have me go home with him, and my father at last has very reluctantly consented to my going," said Noah demurely.

"So you're going to let the rest of us stay to face the music, are you?" demanded Ananias half angrily.

"No music to face, Ananias," laughed Noah confidently. "If there were, you don't think I'd leave, do you?"

"No, I don't think you would, Noah," acknowledged Ananias. "But, for my part, I don't agree with you about one thing. I think there will be something done about that tea burning."

"If there is, I'll come back," said Noah quickly. "I shan't run from Tom Hull or Elnathan Todd. Here we are at the farm," he added, for the boys had been riding slowly forward during this conversation.

Leaving his companions at the entrance of the lane, Noah rode swiftly to the barn, where he discovered Dan and delivered his father's message. Then hastily returning to his friends, all four started back toward Greenwich. Throughout the ride they were silent for the most part, and it

was evident that despite Noah's confident assertion all four, including Noah himself, were not without certain misgivings.

"Why don't you come with us to-morrow?" suggested Caleb to Ananias and Elias, when the boys had entered the village and were preparing to separate. "You know I'd be glad to have you."

"Have to stay and face the music," replied Elias demurely. "If you and Noah leave, it will be all the more reason for Ananias and me not running away."

Noah laughed, but made no reply, and in a brief time he and Caleb arrived at Mr. Dare's house. To the surprise of the boys they found Mr. Dare in the barn, apparently awaiting their coming. Noah was aware that his father was troubled, for without inquiring whether his message had been delivered or not, Mr. Dare said, "Caleb, did you say you and Noah preferred going to-day? Very well, then," continued Mr. Dare, without waiting for a response, "I am willing, and as soon as you boys have had your dinner you may start. The catboat is all ready, for I have been down to the dock and looked after it myself."

CHAPTER XIV

A RACE ON THE BAY

EARLY in the afternoon Noah and Caleb made their way to the dock, and at once prepared to set sail. They stored on board the fleet little catboat the luggage they had brought, and then hoisted the sail. As they were about to cast off, Elnathan Todd appeared, and evidently suspicious of the departure of the boys, he quickly approached the end of the dock where the catboat was lying, and hailed them.

“Why are thee leaving, Friend Caleb?” he demanded.

“It’s a good day for a sail,” replied Caleb, without pausing in his task.

“Does thee think thee will go home?”

“A man has a right to go there if he wants to, has n’t he?”

“I think not in a time like this.”

“Why not?” demanded Caleb, pausing for a moment and gazing intently at the young Quaker.

“Because thee are wanted here in Greenwich.”

“Who wants me?”

“Thee knows the grand jury is sitting.”

“No, I don’t know it,” retorted Caleb promptly, although in spite of his apparent boldness there was a quickening of his pulse as he spoke.

“It is true whether thee knows it or not,” responded Elnathan, with a smile that betrayed his satisfaction. “I do not think it will avail thee much to run away.”

“Have you been summoned, Elnathan?” demanded Noah.

“Yea.”

“Will they indict you?”

“Nay, that they will not! I am innocent, as thee well knows.”

“No, I don’t know anything of the kind,” retorted Noah. “There are some other things I ‘knowest,’ though, and one of them is that if you have not told the truth just as it is, then Cale and I will have to go before the grand jury and explain what you and we were doing in the Elmer house.”

“Friend Thomas cares nothing for what was done in his house.”

“No. I suppose not. He is interested in the band that burned his tea, for it was

partly his and a part of it belonged to your father."

"Thee cannot prove it was his."

"We'll do our best," retorted Noah. "Cale, we know where to go in Philadelphia to find out, don't we?" he added slyly, turning to his cousin as he spoke.

"We can try," replied Caleb mysteriously.

"Are thee going to Philadelphia?" inquired Elnathan quickly.

"We may, before we come back."

"At what hour are thee to return?"

"Elnathan, if you are here on this end of the dock to-night at exactly half after one of the clock, you might see something to your advantage. Mind you, I don't say you will for sure, but still it might not do any harm if you should just chance to be here at exactly that time. All ready, Cale?" he demanded of his cousin.

"All right," responded Caleb.

"Let her go, then."

The light little catboat sped out from the dock, and started swiftly down the Cohansey before the wind, toward the waters of Delaware Bay. Both boys were so busy for a time in trimming the sail and

shifting the ballast that neither gave any heed to the young Quaker, who was still standing on the dock watching the departing boys.

As soon as everything on board the boat had been properly attended to, Caleb seated himself near his cousin, who was holding the tiller, and looked back at Elnathan, who could still be seen.

“Noah, do you think there is anything in what Elnathan said?” inquired Caleb at last.

“Yes, sir; I do.”

“Do — do you really believe the grand jury will do anything?”

“Looks like it. It was mighty unlucky for us that it should happen to be sitting just now of all times. But it is, and that’s all there is to it. I think that was the reason why my father hurried us off the way he did.”

“I had n’t thought of that. Never mind, Noah, they won’t touch me, for I live in Pennsylvania.” Caleb laughed somewhat uneasily as he spoke, and it was manifest to his cousin that he was troubled by what he had heard.

“And I’m going to Pennsylvania — where all the bad people go.”

"Best people in any one of the thirteen colonies!" retorted Caleb.

"So?" inquired Noah soberly, though his eyes twinkled at Caleb's readiness to respond to the implied slight. "Let me see, the Quakers settled there, did n't they?"

"They did that. And a good people they are, too."

"Elnathan is a Quaker, is n't he?"

"I suppose he is, but there are not many like him and his father."

"Let us hope there won't be, either! What would you do, Cale, if our two Quaker friends and Tom Hull should come after us?"

"They are n't coming, are they?" demanded Caleb hastily, as he instantly turned and looked back at the dock now far behind them.

"I don't know. There's a boat coming down the creek. It left the dock pretty soon after we did."

It was true, as Noah had declared, that a sailboat was coming down the Cohansey, and it was not long before the boys could perceive that there were two occupants in it.

"They could n't do anything to us," remarked Caleb, after a brief silence.

“Not if they had warrants?”

“But they have n’t. They could n’t have.”

“Oh, I don’t know about that. The grand jury, you know, was in session yesterday and probably this morning, too, for the matter of that.”

“You don’t believe it, Noah!”

“One never can tell,” responded Noah soberly. It was one of the pleasures in which he frequently indulged to “torment his cousin,” as he himself expressed it, for Caleb was so matter-of-fact in all his ways that to arouse his fears was never a difficult task. Not that Caleb was lacking in courage, as no one knew better than Noah himself, but he was so literal in all his own statements that his cousin’s ways were a never-ending source of perplexity to him, and Noah was not at all backward in his efforts to confuse his friend.

“Cale,” he said, as the catboat sped forward, “I verily believe that boat is after us; and if I am not mistaken, that’s Tom Hull and Elnathan Todd in it, too.” Noah’s tones had abruptly changed, and even Caleb could perceive that his cousin was in earnest now.

“Shall we come about and wait for them?” inquired Caleb anxiously.

“Not this trip!” replied Noah promptly. “At least we’ll lead them a merry chase first,” he added. “If they think they can overhaul us with that tub they’re welcome to do it.”

“But if they really want us” — began Caleb.

“If they do they’ll have to come where we are,” interrupted Noah. “And that’s what they do seem to want,” he added, as a faint sound of a shout or hail came from the boat behind them.

“Are you going to come about?”

“Haul in on your sheet, Cale!” was Noah’s sharp response. The wind was strong and the little catboat careened until her gunwale was almost under the water, and as she sped forward her wake was like a seething, boiling mass. The other boat, too, had caught the full force of the wind and was driving ahead with a speed that puzzled Noah and was not a little disconcerting to his companion. Apparently, however, the distance between the boats was not lessened, and a smile of exultation appeared on Noah’s face.

“Why don’t you answer their hail?” demanded Caleb, as another shout was heard across the water.

“Too busy,” retorted Noah, as he brought the catboat up into the wind.

“They may have something different from what you think to say to us.”

“Don’t you believe it, Cale! Elnathan and Tom Hull don’t know but one word between them both. I know what it is without stopping to hear it.”

“But we may be only making trouble,” protested Caleb, who by this time was seriously disturbed by the pursuit.

“Cale, what do you think Anthony Wayne would do if he were here? Would he stop to parley with such men?”

“No-o-o. I don’t believe he would.”

“You think he’s a good man, don’t you?”

“Yes, sir; I do! You know what I think of him.”

“I reckon I do,” laughed Noah. “And we must try to do what good men do,” he added demurely. “Then, too, it would n’t be right for me not to go on home with you now.”

“Not ‘right’?”

“That’s it. It would n’t be right. Don’t you know, ‘Children, obey your parents?’ Well, did n’t my father tell me to go back with you? I’d like to know if that is n’t just what I’m doing. I’m going to obey my parents in spite of Tom Hull or El-nathan Todd, for I want ‘my days to be long in the land.’”

“Go ahead, Noah,” laughed Caleb. “There is n’t any use in talking to you.”

“And then I *must* see Anthony Wayne,” continued Noah. “I might stop to hold sweet converse with Mr. Thomas Hull, Esquire, if it was not for that. I can’t wait now.”

Certainly there was no “waiting” apparently to be seen in either boat. The wind still held strong and the boats sped over the water at a marvelous speed. The “tub,” as Noah had mockingly called the pursuing boat, was making excellent time, and despite the efforts of the young skipper, the distance between the two was not increased.

“Had n’t we better take a reef, Noah?” inquired Caleb somewhat anxiously, as the catboat careened until the water rushed over the rail.

“Not before Tom Hull does,” responded Noah sturdily.

The wind apparently was rising steadily, and the waves in the bay, upon which the boats had now entered, were capped with white. Caleb’s face betrayed his alarm, but the sight of the boat behind him caused Noah to disregard every suggestion his cousin made. Both boats were flinging the spray wildly by this time, and Caleb’s teeth were chattering, for he was drenched and cold. Neither party apparently was willing to adopt even reasonable precautions, though Noah was aware now that the strain upon his boat was more than she ought to bear. On and still on flew pursued and pursuer, and then in a moment the mad race was abruptly ended.

CHAPTER XV

NOAH DARE'S "OBEDIENCE"

"LOOK at that! They're overboard! Their tub has capsized!" exclaimed Caleb excitedly, as he pointed at the boat behind them.

One glance was sufficient to enable Noah to perceive that his cousin had spoken truly. The pursuing boat was certainly in trouble and had overturned. Even while he gazed at the sight he could see one of the men clamber up on the bottom of the overturned boat, but his companion was nowhere to be seen. Not a shout had been raised nor a call heard, and the misfortune had occurred so suddenly that the boys were scarcely aware of the peril of their recent pursuers, even when they perceived what had befallen them.

Instantly, however, Noah without a word brought his catboat about, and in a moment the fleet little craft was speeding back to the rescue of the imperiled pursuers.

"Take that rope, Cale! Fling a line for the one in the water!" called Noah sharply.

"Where is he?" asked Caleb. "I don't see him! Where" —

"Right there by the stern! There, you can see his head now! Stand by to give him the rope! Now! Now!" shouted Noah. "Let him have it!"

As the speed of the catboat slackened, Caleb somewhat awkwardly flung the line, at the same time calling loudly to Mr. Hull, whom he had discovered to be the one in the water.

The man's hand was flung up as the rope was cast and instantly he grasped the end of the coil. The boat was still under motion, and as the rope became taut, Caleb was nearly drawn into the water himself. A smothered exclamation of anger or alarm came from Noah's lips, but before he could say anything Caleb had grasped the mast, for he was standing in the bow, and for the moment was safe.

"Now, show you're not a lubber!" cried Noah. "Come aft! Come aft! Don't stay there! Come aft now, as I bring her up! That's right! Now, haul in! Haul in! Look out! That's right! Now, then! He's all right! Give him a lift! Here, I'll help," he added, as placing the tiller between his

knees he reached forward and seized the rope in his hands, while Caleb bent over and grasped the arm of the struggling man. In a moment the drenched and panting Thomas Hull was dragged on board, and Noah instantly dropped the rope and gave all his attention to his boat, which now had once more caught the full force of the wind and was speeding over the water like a thing alive. In a brief time the skillful young skipper again swept backward in his course and drew near the overturned boat to which Elnathan could be seen clinging.

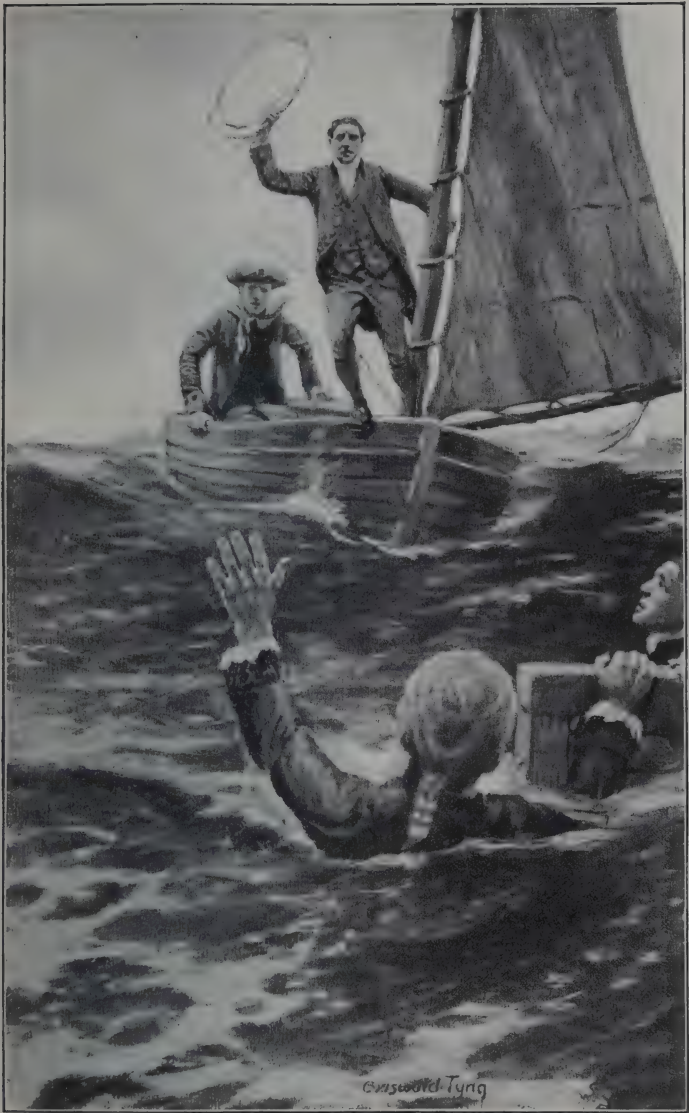
“Give him the rope now!” called Noah. “Let him have it.”

But Caleb’s hands were unsteady in his excitement, and when he flung the rope it went wide of its mark.

Noah’s lips tightened, but he did not speak as he once more sent his catboat on the circular course, and in a brief time again approached the white-faced Elnathan.

“Don’t miss him this time, Cale! Be careful! Now! Let him have it!” called the young skipper sharply.

Caleb flung his coil with greater care and the rope fell directly in front of Elnathan.



THE MAN'S HAND WAS FLUNG UP

With a desperate clutch the young Quaker seized it, but before he could recover himself, the catboat suddenly caught the wind and the force of her sudden motion yanked the rope from Elnathan's grasp, although he was torn from his place of refuge and was left struggling in the water.

"He can't swim! He'll drown!" shouted Thomas Hull frantically, as he perceived what had befallen his companion. "Help him. Don't leave him! He'll drown! What are you leaving him for?" he added, his teeth chattering with the cold and excitement under which he was laboring.

Noah did not even glance at the excited man as he swiftly brought his boat about and returned to the spot where Elnathan had disappeared. He was bending forward, his eyes searching the water, and with an expression on his face such as Caleb, who for an instant had glanced at his cousin, had never before seen there.

"There he is! Give him the rope!" Noah shouted, as for a moment the dark hair of Elnathan appeared on the surface of the water. His face could not be seen, and even while he looked Noah was aware that the young Quaker was sinking again.

“Here! Take the tiller! Keep her” — he suddenly called; and then before any of the men realized what was taking place, Noah leaped to the rail and without hesitating an instant dove far down into the water.

Caleb had quickly seized the tiller, but he was so excited by Noah’s unexpected action that he was more mindful of him than of the boat he was supposed to handle. A movement of the catboat, a loud flapping of the sail, instantly recalled him to the fresh peril of his cousin, but it was impossible now to return. The boat had swung around before the wind and was darting swiftly ahead.

“You lubber!” yelled Mr. Hull, as he leaped forward. “Do you want to drown them both? Here, give me that tiller! I’ll” —

“Keep your hands off!” said Caleb, in a voice that betrayed his fear. Then, endeavoring to do what he had seen his cousin do many a time, he brought the catboat about and sped back to the rescue of Noah. “Take that rope!” he shouted to his companion. “Look sharp, now! Ah, there they are!” he added with a sigh of relief, as his

cousin could be seen clinging to the keel of the upturned boat and at the same time with one arm supporting the apparently lifeless form of Elnathan.

In his excitement Caleb was unable to steer properly, and despite his efforts the sharp bow of the catboat with full force struck the other boat within a few inches of the place to which Noah was clinging. There was a crash at the collision and the shock threw Mr. Hull upon his back. Caleb, however, instantly let go his grasp on the tiller, leaped to the bow, and leaned out to rescue the two boys, for Noah somehow had contrived to maintain his hold upon Elnathan in spite of the force with which the boat had been struck.

"Take him," gasped Noah.

Mr. Hull by this time had recovered from his fall and leaning over by Caleb's side grasped one of Elnathan's arms as Caleb seized the other, and together they lifted the unconscious young Quaker into the boat. Before they could turn again to the aid of Noah the sail had filled and the catboat careened almost as if it would follow the example of the other boat. With a shout Caleb leaped for the tiller, but when

he had brought the boat safely up into the wind Noah was at least twenty feet away.

“Hang on, Noah! We’ll be back in a minute,” Caleb shouted; and in a brief time the catboat was again approaching the wreck. Not a sound had come from Noah, and in an agony of fear Caleb watched the form of his cousin still to be seen clinging to the keel, although Caleb was fearful any moment to see the hands let go and Noah disappear beneath the water.

“Stand by with that rope!” Caleb shouted to Mr. Hull. “We’ll try to grab him with our hands, but if we can’t, fling him the rope! Now, then! Look sharp! Now ”—

Caleb did not complete the sentence, for the catboat was close to the spot he was seeking to gain. As the sail flapped loudly, he, despite the peril of capsizing, abandoned the tiller, leaped to the side of Mr. Hull, who was bending far out over the boat, and together they seized Noah, one grasping an arm and the other the coat, and by one strong pull drew him into the boat. Without waiting an instant, Caleb darted again to the tiller, which he fortu-

nately seized in time to prevent further trouble, and in a moment more the cat-boat was speeding over the waters of Delaware Bay.

In spite of his thrilling experience, Noah was by no means overcome, and in a brief time he insisted upon taking the tiller again while his companions at once gave their attention to Elnathan. It was not long before the young Quaker, too, had recovered, and as soon as Thomas Hull perceived that his friend was in no peril, he turned to Noah.

"Are you not going to tow our boat in for us?" he demanded.

"I am n-not," chattered Noah.

"Why not? It's the"—

"It has a hole in the bottom now," interrupted Noah. "It's a g-good d-deal better to g-get into town and get something hot into us a-and s-something warm on us than it is t-to save the old t-tub." Noah was shivering, and he was surprised that Thomas Hull did not show more the effects of his drenching.

"Noah, I'll give you two half-joes to take us straight back to Greenwich."

"T-that was w-what you c-came for,

w-was n't it?" chattered Noah, who despite his suffering was heading the catboat straight for the docks at the foot of Market Street, which even now could be seen in the distance. "Y-you wanted us t-to go back with you."

"You can land us and you need n't touch the dock yourself if you don't want to."

"That's g-good of you. B-but I can't do it, Mr. Hull. 'Children, obey y-your p-parents,' you know."

"What's that got to do with taking us back to Greenwich?"

"My f-father told me t-to go to Chester."

"You can do that afterward."

"Can't do it."

Mr. Hull was silent a moment before he said, "Well, Noah, if you'll take us back I'll promise to speak a good word for you. I'll forget about burning the tea."

"W-what t-tea?"

"You know all about it. The tea you burned."

"I d-did n't know but you meant you were going to g-give us some hot t-tea when we land in Philadelphia. You promised the t-tea and I r-reckon there are p-plenty

of men in town who will make it hot for you — j-just as h-hot as you want it."

"I made you a fair offer, Noah."

"I'll t-tell the people about it w-when I come home."

"When will that be?"

"C-can't say. Just n-now, I'm interested in making a good landing."

Mr. Hull did not speak again, and in a brief time the little catboat was run in alongside the dock, but even Noah's chattering ceased when Caleb with a shout leaped upon the dock, and without waiting to assist his cousin pointed toward a group of men standing in the street.

CHAPTER XVI

A MEETING WITH ANTHONY WAYNE

“THERE’S Anthony Wayne!” exclaimed Caleb, in a low voice to his cousin.

“Where? Where?” demanded Noah, who despite his predicament was deeply interested in the man whom Caleb so greatly admired.

“There! He’s the middle one of those three men across the street.”

Noah eagerly looked in the direction in which his cousin pointed and saw a young man not more than thirty years of age, tall and muscular, with curling dark hair, dark eyes that were marvelously keen in their expression, and sharply defined features that indicated energy and intelligence on the part of their possessor.

Almost unmindful of his immediate surroundings, Noah gazed at the striking-looking man without speaking, although he was aware that his cousin was observing him with an interest that was intense.

“What do you think of him? Is n’t he great?” demanded Caleb, in a whisper.

“Yes. I think he looks as if he could do things,” said Noah slowly. He had not turned away his eyes once from the sight of the dashing man, who was as impressive in his dress as he was in his person. Indeed, all through the War of the Revolution “Mad Anthony,” as he later was dubbed by his men, was as insistent upon the good appearance of his regiments as he was strict and stern in his discipline.

To the surprise of both boys Anthony Wayne came directly across the street and, recognizing Caleb, at once advanced and shook him by the hand most cordially.

Noah was now presented, and though Caleb’s voice trembled slightly as he introduced his cousin, Noah himself was quiet and self-possessed as he bowed low to the leader.

“What does this mean, Caleb?” laughed Anthony Wayne, as he noted the condition of Noah’s garments. “Have you thrown your cousin overboard on your way back from Greenwich?”

“Not quite so bad as that,” responded Caleb. “We had an adventure out here on the bay.”

As Caleb spoke he turned quickly to dis-

cover what had become of Elnathan Toda and Thomas Hull. To his surprise neither of the men was to be seen. "Where 's Elnathan?" he demanded suddenly, as he turned again to his cousin.

"Bless me! I 'd forgotten all about them," exclaimed Noah. "Well, they 're gone," he added, as he perceived that neither of the two men was on the dock. "It's a good riddance!"

"Who are they?" inquired Anthony Wayne.

"I'll tell you all about it," said Caleb eagerly. "Noah," he added, "you go up to John's" (John was the name by which the man was known who kept the stable where Caleb was accustomed to leave his horse on the occasion of his trips to Philadelphia), "and see if you can get some dry clothes. I'll wait for you here."

Noah glanced at his own dripping garments and at once acted upon the suggestion, leaving the two men behind him on the dock. In a half hour he returned on horseback, having secured a horse for himself and leading Caleb's by the bridle.

"I'm like another man now, Cale," he said lightly, as he drew near. "A good rub-

down and a fresh horse have put new life into me."

"Your cousin has been telling me about the recent excitement in Greenwich," said Anthony Wayne, his eyes brightening as he spoke. "That's one of the best things I have heard for many a day. If all our people would show the same spirit, we'd soon have an end of these troubles."

"I'm not sure we've seen the end of them at Greenwich," replied Noah.

"Your cousin tells me you are a great wrestler," said Anthony Wayne abruptly.

"My cousin is not the best judge."

"But he is!" protested Caleb eagerly. "There is n't a man in Greenwich that can throw him."

"Are you going to ride over to Chester now?" inquired Anthony Wayne.

"Yes, sir," responded Caleb; "that is, just as soon as Noah has seen to his cat-boat."

"That's all right now," laughed Noah. "John said he would come himself or send Sampson to take her around to his slip. She'll be all right, for I always leave her in their care."

"Then we can start now," said Caleb,

as he leaped upon the back of his own horse.

"I am going to Chester, and if you two young gentlemen will wait until I can get my horse we can go together."

"That will be great!" exclaimed Caleb eagerly. "We'll be glad to wait for you here."

Anthony Wayne at once departed, walking swiftly up the street, apparently unaware that the two boys were intently watching him.

"Cale," said Noah, "I don't wonder that you like that man."

"I knew you'd like him just the moment you saw him."

"I do. He makes my backbone tingle every time I look at him."

"That's the way he makes everybody feel."

"I wish Elnathan could see him, then," laughed Noah.

"Oh, nothing could make him stir."

"Not even Anthony Wayne?"

"He could if any one. But you can't put any live blood into Elnathan Todd. He has n't anything to hold it."

"There comes your friend," said Noah,

as Anthony Wayne could be seen riding swiftly toward the dock. "He must be in great haste to ride like that."

"That's the way he does everything," said Caleb.

Noah did not reply, and in a brief time the dashing rider came near, drawing the rein on his horse so sharply that the animal was nearly thrown back upon its haunches.

"All ready, young gentlemen?" demanded Anthony Wayne.

"Yes, sir," responded Caleb, and the trio at once set forth on the ride to Chester. Even within the limits of Philadelphia the pace which the leader set was so swift that people stopped in the streets and gazed at the riders. Apparently unaware of the interest he was arousing, Anthony Wayne did not slacken the speed at which they were riding, and in a brief time the three men turned into the country road that led toward the place they were seeking.

Abruptly bringing his horse to a walk, an example his companions at once followed, Anthony Wayne turned to Noah and said quietly, "Your cousin has been giving me his account of the tea burning

at Greenwich. Now I should be pleased to have you give me your version."

"There is n't very much to tell," said Noah quietly, at the same time glancing keenly at Caleb. "I am willing to tell you what little I know." Without mentioning names or going into details, Noah then briefly related what had occurred from the night when the Greyhound had sailed up the Cohansey to the landing of the catboat at the dock at the foot of Market Street. Anthony Wayne listened quietly save for an occasional flash in his dark eyes, and then when the story was ended he abruptly said:—

"And what now?"

"I don't know just what you mean, sir."

"What is the next move?"

"I shall not move. I think, though, there's likely to be trouble, for the grand jury was in session when we left town."

"Why, then, did you leave?"

"My father wanted me to pay a visit at Caleb's — at my uncle's home."

Anthony Wayne laughed aloud at the reply, and then said in his quick, nervous manner, "How long do you plan to stay in Chester?"

“I don’t plan at all. I simply don’t know how long I’ll be there.”

“Will you go back to Greenwich if you are wanted there?”

“Yes, sir. I’m not running away.”

“No, no; I know that. Of course you’re not. No one thought of such a thing. Caleb,” he demanded, turning quickly as he spoke, “do you think your cousin here could throw Joe Latrobe?”

“Yes, sir; I do.”

“Then we’ll give him a chance to prove it to-morrow afternoon. To-morrow we have a drill at ten of the clock. You’ll be back home just in time, and you must be sure to bring your cousin with you.”

“I’d like to see the drill,” said Noah, “but I don’t know that I care to wrestle with this man — what did you say his name is — Joe Latrobe?”

“Yes, yes; that’s his name,” replied Anthony Wayne, in his quick way. “I shan’t press the matter. I should not want a guest of Caleb’s to be hurt.”

“Noah is n’t afraid of being hurt,” spoke up Caleb. “That’s not it.”

“What is it, then?”

"I am not very fond of making an exhibition of myself," explained Noah.

"Joe will weigh a stone more than your cousin, won't he?" inquired Anthony Wayne of Caleb, apparently ignoring Noah's response.

"More than that," said Caleb eagerly. "And he has a longer arm and"—

"Let me see, Joe Latrobe has thrown every man in the company, has n't he?"

"He has thrown the best men."

"Yes. Yes. That's what I said. He is the most enthusiastic man in the company and I've sometimes thought he'd like to try a fall out of me." Anthony Wayne's dark eyes seemed to show that he was laughing, although no smile appeared. "Perhaps some day I'll let him have his wish," he added. "Joe is such an enthusiastic Pennsylvanian, too. He thinks one man from Pennsylvania with one hand tied behind his back can whip any two men from any other colony. He seems to have a special grudge against the Jerseys."

"Jersey does n't seem to care," said Noah. "I had n't noticed any commotion around Greenwich."

"No. That may be so. That's very true,"

said Anthony Wayne dryly. "But when a Jerseyman does n't dare to" —

"I'll wrestle with him to-morrow," interrupted Noah.

"Good! Good! I knew you'd come to it, young man." Anthony Wayne spoke lightly; then suddenly changing his tone and manner, he continued, "I am not sure I shall be there to see Joe put you on your back. I have much to do. I tell you, young gentlemen, there's trouble ahead, and I am doing what I can to make the people ready. I have given up all my other work, and am just organizing and drilling companies all through the county. There's trouble ahead. There's trouble ahead. There surely is."

CHAPTER XVII

THE CONTEST ON THE GREEN

THE following day dawned clear and cool, and at ten o'clock Caleb and Noah were on the village green where Anthony Wayne's men had assembled for their drill. Caleb was dressed in the neat and somewhat showy uniform of the company, for among the leader's strictest requirements was that which not one of the men dared neglect — the appearing in neat and becoming dress. Apparently neither of the boys had suffered any from the exciting experiences of the preceding day, and Noah at least was free from excitement as he eagerly watched the assembly. It was all new to him, and his interest was keen as he observed the pride with which the men all watched the actions of Anthony Wayne, who, as he moved briskly about among the militiamen, had a word of praise for the appearance of some and an equally sharp rebuke for any neglect that was apparent in the garb of others. Whether praise or blame was given, how-

ever, seemed to matter little in the feelings of the company toward their leader. There was an element of confidence, of pride, in the wiry, energetic man whose very presence served to arouse an eager response from every man.

For an hour the drill continued, and to Noah the stern words of Anthony Wayne, as he shouted to some laggard or seized with his own hands and shook into a more soldierly bearing some of the embryo soldiers that had failed in certain details, seemed almost out of place. To the young Jerseyman the drill appeared in every way to be perfect, and as he watched the men marching and countermarching, and responding to the calls of the officers, it all seemed to be the very precision of action — every man moving as if he were a part in a great machine that swung forward with the precision of clockwork. Not a word had the leader spoken to Noah that morning, although the latter had been confident that Anthony Wayne had perceived him standing in the midst of the few spectators who had assembled to watch the militiamen in their evolutions. At first Noah had been somewhat resentful at what seemed to him

very like a slight after the conversation of the preceding day, but his interest in what he beheld was so keen that the feeling soon passed as he watched the men in their duties. It was, therefore, with somewhat of a shock of surprise that he realized, after the men had been left standing in a circle on the green, every man at "order arms," that Anthony Wayne was approaching the place where he was standing, and a moment afterwards he became aware that the great man was speaking to him.

"Good-morning to you, Noah Dare," the colonel was saying. "And how are you feeling this fine day?"

"I never felt better."

"Good! Then you are ready, I take it?"

"Ready? Ready for what?"

"For that wrestling match we arranged yesterday on our way from Philadelphia."

"Did you really mean that?" demanded Noah slowly.

"Mean it? Why, certainly, I meant it. I meant every word of it." The man's dark eyes seemed to Noah to be twinkling with fun or excitement, and it was evident that he was not joking.

For a moment Noah was silent. He

glanced at the circle of men, wondering which one of them was to be his contestant. He himself had no desire to engage in a wrestling bout, but he was aware of the colonel's feelings from what Caleb had told him, as well as from what Anthony Wayne himself had said. Besides, there was an intense interest among the boys and younger men of the time in every physical contest or test of strength that could be devised. And wrestling was the most common of all the sports of the day.

"Young man," said Anthony Wayne, "I don't want to urge you into this if you don't want to try it. Joe Latrobe is the best man in this part of Pennsylvania, and there is n't a man except Caleb who knows anything about the match having been thought of, so if you feel like backing out no one will be the wiser."

To Noah it seemed as if there was a note of compassion in the leader's words, and he instantly said in a low voice, "Colonel Wayne, who has said anything about backing out?"

"No one. No one but myself," said Anthony Wayne, with a laugh. "But you

did have a pretty hard experience yesterday, and if you'd rather try it some other day"—

"One day is as good as another," broke in Noah quietly.

"The men are all here now."

"Is this Joe Latrobe here?"

"He is."

"I'm ready if he is. Does he know anything about it?"

"Not a word. But he will."

Anthony Wayne turned quickly and rejoined his men. Noah could not hear what he said, but the interest of the company was instantly aroused, and when one of them advanced into the centre, Noah at once concluded that Joe Latrobe was prepared to defend his title then and there.

In a moment Anthony Wayne came back to the place where Noah was still standing and laughingly said, "Every man is as ready as you are, Noah Dare. Come on and I'll take you into the ring."

Noah did not reply, but he at once accompanied the colonel and started toward the circle. He could see that the men were regarding him curiously as he approached, and there were smiles on some of the faces

that were strangely irritating to him. It was manifest, too, that the men had no fear for their champion, and as Noah glanced at the man that was standing in the centre of the circle he could but feel that their confidence was not entirely misplaced, for Joe Latrobe was at least four inches taller than he and weighed much more. There was no time to continue his observations, however, for Anthony Wayne at once faced his men and said, "We have a young Jerseyman here who is willing to make Joe Latrobe prove his title."

Noah could see the white face of Caleb in the line, and plainly his cousin was distressed by the thought of the possibility of the downfall of Noah. The sight and the conjecture as to what was present in his cousin's thoughts served to make the muscles in Noah's well-knit body slightly more tense, but outwardly he gave no sign that Caleb's anxiety had in any way affected him, for he turned again to hear what Anthony Wayne was saying.

"We'll have two falls square hold (square 'holt' most of the men termed it) and two side hold," the leader was saying. "Three out of four will mark the winner, but if

each man wins two, then we'll have one fall catch as catch can."

A laughing response came from the eager listeners, and then the leader turned to Noah and said in a low voice, "Are you ready?"

"I'm ready," responded Noah quietly, as he stripped off his jacket and tossed it upon the ground.

He then advanced toward his opponent, who had been watching him with a smile on his face that increased Noah's feeling of irritation. It was plain that Joe Latrobe had slight fear as he looked down upon his smaller antagonist that he was likely to lose any of his honors in the approaching struggle. Noah could see that his opponent was a powerful man, and the huge muscles in his arms and shoulders indicated that in muscular strength the man was one to be feared. There were in his bearing, however, slight indications of quickness, and the dull eyes were more like those of some patient brute than of an active or quick-witted man.

The time had arrived for the beginning of the struggle, and as Anthony Wayne gave the word the two men seized each

other and the first of the "square hold" matches was on. Noah Dare never could explain afterward just how the result was achieved, but almost before he had laid his hands upon his opponent's shoulders it seemed to him that some huge weight had fallen upon him and he was crushed to the ground, Joe Latrobe's body falling so heavily upon him as he was thrown that for an instant it seemed to the young wrestler as if all the breath in his body had been forced out.

Joe Latrobe arose, and in a moment Noah followed his example. He was breathing heavily, and the shouts that had greeted his speedy downfall seemed to him to be almost derisive. He glanced hastily at Caleb, and his cousin's compassion was so evident that Noah's anger was aroused. His coolness, however, did not depart from him, and he turned again to face his opponent. There was a grin of satisfaction on the dull features of Joe Latrobe which, when Noah perceived it, at once aroused within him a renewed spirit of determination. He was on his guard now against the method of his antagonist, and when the two locked arms to enter the second contest

Noah was careful to keep himself slightly farther away.

As he had expected, Joe Latrobe quickly followed the same tactics he had before employed; but this time he failed, for Noah held himself at arm's length and could not be borne down by the sudden powerful onslaught. The two men were now exerting all their strength, and as the moments slowly passed Noah became convinced that Joe Latrobe had only one method to use, that of suddenly bearing down upon his opponent and by the united use of strength and weight crushing the other man to the ground. He was prepared now to meet that style of wrestling, he assured himself, and when three minutes had elapsed and both men with tense muscles and straining eyes were still facing each other, the interest of the spectators became intense and there were shouts of encouragement for their representative.

"Good boy, Joe. You've got him now. That's right. A-a-ah!" came like a long-drawn sigh from the assembly, as Joe Latrobe for a moment seemed to be on the point of succeeding again in the sole method which he persistently used.

Again the long sigh arose as once more the larger man seemed to draw his antagonist to him and then throw his entire weight into the struggle. But this time the champion had in a measure neglected to guard himself. In his eagerness he threw himself forward as Noah seemed to yield slightly before the onslaught, but before he could recover himself he was suddenly thrust backward by the unlooked-for exertion of his opponent, and before he was fully aware of what had occurred Noah's right foot was behind him and the wrestler fell backward to the ground with the younger and lighter man on top.

The silence of the assembly was broken by the loud shout of Caleb, "Good boy, Noah! You had him that time! Good! Good for you, Noah!"

Noah could hear his cousin's calls, but Joe Latrobe had not relaxed his hold and the young wrestler was so firmly held in the embrace that he was unable to rise.

"Let go of your man!" commanded Anthony Wayne sternly, as he ran quickly to the place where the two contestants were lying. "That's no way! You're down, Joe! Let go your man, I say!" he

repeated savagely, as he seized Joe Latrobe's arms and tore them loose.

When the two wrestlers arose Noah was startled at the expression in the eyes of the man before him. It was like the blind rage of some infuriated animal. In spite of his recent success Noah was alarmed by what he saw, and turned to see if Anthony Wayne had also seen.

Apparently the leader was ignorant of that which had disturbed Noah, for he quickly called out that the next contest would be a side hold. There was apparently no opportunity for delay or explanation, and somewhat reluctantly Noah prepared for the bout which he was fearful might end in a way unlooked for by the spectators, all of whom were now excited and shouting.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE VICTOR

THE two wrestlers, apparently ignoring the excitement of the spectators, at once advanced toward each other, and in a moment were locked in an embrace for the side hold. Noah instantly was aware that he had secured the better hold, but he was also awake to the fact that Joe Latrobe was possessed of a greater strength than his own. The slower-witted man, however, was evidently depending upon this very fact, for his grip steadily tightened, and it was plain to Noah that the man had still greater power in reserve. The arms that were holding him were like bands of steel, and the pressure was so strong that the young wrestler was unable to exert himself in the manner in which he had planned. The heavy breathing of the older and larger man sounded so loudly in his ears that Noah was scarcely aware of the shouting of the assemblage. He was even unable to see the expression in the face of the man

by whom he was held in a grasp that was like that of some merciless, powerful machine. Even the tricks with which he was familiar, and that had been frequently employed by him in his contests at Greenwich, seemed to be of no avail in his present predicament.

Noah soon perceived that his opponent's strength seemed to be exerted mainly by his arms. Thus far the man had made no direct attempt to throw his opponent and apparently was striving to break him down by the hug he was giving, — a hug that Noah was convinced would have made the proverbial bear envious. Back and forth the bodies swayed and the plaudits of the admiring soldiers redoubled. All the laughter which had greeted Noah's first fall had ceased and the pride of the Pennsylvania men was aroused to uphold the defender of their honor. There was a shouting of Joe Latrobe's name that Noah dimly heard, but it produced no effect upon him, for all his wit and strength were united in what almost appeared to him to be a hopeless effort to prevent himself from being twisted into a position in which he might be easily tripped and thrown.

Steadily Noah felt his own body brought forward and nearer to the ground. The manifest purpose of Joe Latrobe was not to throw him upon his back but to force his body forward until his balance had been lost, when it would be a comparatively easy matter to bring him to the ground, and in falling the power of the abler man would be exerted to turn his opponent quickly upon his back and thereby claim the fall. The purpose was so plain to Noah that he speedily became aware that if he was not to lose, it must be by meeting this very plan of attack. To regain his upright position was impossible, as his continued efforts plainly proved.

Five minutes had now elapsed since the beginning of the struggle and Joe Latrobe's strength did not seem to be any less than when the two wrestlers had first been locked in their embrace. The swaying bodies still were clinging to each other, though by this time in Noah's ears there was a sound as of a great wind blowing about him. His breathing was difficult and his eyes could see only the ground below him, which appeared to be rising and falling like the waves of the sea. His strength was

going, too, he realized, and he was panting like some struggling beast. His grip upon his opponent had not as yet relaxed and the plaudits of the spectators were louder than ever they had been.

Noah realized that the supreme moment was upon him. As yet Joe Latrobe had not made any attempt to trip him, but the younger wrestler was looking now for an attempt on the part of his adversary, and if he was forced forward two inches more he knew that he would be unable to recover himself.

Suddenly Joe Latrobe did just what Noah had been expecting him to do. He threw himself forward, added his weight to the strength he exerted, and his body leaned more heavily upon that of Noah. Instantly the younger wrestler relaxed for a moment and his opponent was almost upon his shoulders. Without any attempt to recover himself, Noah permitted himself to be drawn a little farther under the body of the man and then, his heart exulting as he became aware that the very opportunity for which he had been longing had come, he braced himself when his opponent's feet had lost a part of their sure

hold upon the earth, and availing himself of every ounce of power at his command, he lifted his heavier opponent fairly from the ground.

For a moment Noah staggered and almost fell. Quickly regaining his advantage he slowly and steadily brought Joe Latrobe up over his back. The man's feet were now clear from the ground, and deprived of the power to brace himself he was unable to exert all his strength. By a violent effort Noah thrust his own body a little farther under the load he was carrying, and, slowly, Joe Latrobe rose still higher from the ground. The man was kicking violently, but his efforts afforded no protection. His arms tightened in their clasp and almost crushed the breath from Noah's body. The assembled spectators were shouting frantically and for an instant above the turmoil the shrill voice of Caleb could be heard screaming his encouragement to his cousin.

Noah now had brought the burden upon his shoulders forward to a place where his own final attempt could be made. Once more bracing his feet firmly against the sod, he closed his eyes and shut his jaws

firmly together, and then exerted himself in his last great effort. Steadily the kicking legs of Joe Latrobe rose higher and higher, and then, at Noah's last attempt, they suddenly shot forward, making a semi-circle over the back of the younger wrestler, and the champion of the Chester company was thrown hard upon his back. His grasp upon Noah, however, was not relaxed, and both men fell, their arms still in the unbroken clasp, though there was no question that the fall belonged to Noah Dare, for Joe Latrobe had been thrown squarely upon his back. His arm had slipped up until Noah's neck was held in a tight embrace and his breath was shut off. For a moment everything turned black before him. The heavy weight which rested upon him increased his feeling of suffocation and it was impossible for him to find relief or release.

The young victor, however, was not left long in his predicament, for once more Anthony Wayne ran forward and, seizing the arms of Joe Latrobe, he savagely broke the wrestler's hold, and then angrily demanded that the men should rise.

Noah instantly responded, and almost



EXERTED HIMSELF IN HIS LAST GREAT EFFORT

gasping for breath, struggled to his feet, though his recent contestant did not rise but lay moaning and rolling about upon the grass.

“Get up! Get up!” commanded Anthony Wayne savagely. “Don’t lie there taking on like a sick girl! Get up, Joe, and show yourself a man!”

“I can’t! I can’t!” moaned the fallen wrestler, still continuing his contortions.

“Why not? What’s the matter with you?” demanded the colonel.

“My arm! My arm!” groaned Joe Latrobe.

“Let me see it!” said Anthony Wayne quickly, and he at once knelt and examined the member. “I don’t know whether it’s broken or not, Joe,” he said at last. “It may be only sprained, but it’s swelling like a puff ball. Get up! Come with me, and I’ll go with you to a surgeon.”

“I’m sorry if I hurt — if you are hurt,” said Noah, instantly advancing to the side of the man who now had risen by the assistance of some of the men who had come to his aid.

Joe Latrobe made no response, though he stared stupidly into Noah’s face.

"I'll go with you," Noah added quickly. "I suppose the bout is off for to-day?" he added, turning as he spoke to Anthony Wayne.

"Rather," remarked the colonel dryly.

"Let me go with him to the surgeon's," pleaded Noah. "Here's Cale," he added, as his cousin now joined the group. "He and I will take him."

"Very well. Is that all right, Joe?"

The wrestler stared stupidly into Anthony Wayne's face and then nodded his head as if he did not fully understand what had been said to him.

Noah, ignoring the words of praise which were spoken by the near-by men, at once secured Joe Latrobe's coat and tenderly placing it about the man's shoulders led him away, accompanied by Caleb. The wrestler made no protest, and in a brief time the three men arrived at the house they were seeking and, fortunately, found the physician within.

"It's a sprain and a bad one, too, Joe," said the surgeon, as soon as he had examined the injured arm. "How did it occur?"

"He threw me," responded Joe La-

trobe sullenly, nodding his head at Noah as he spoke.

“He threw you? This young man threw you, Joe?” said the doctor in surprise. “Why, I am surprised at that! I did n’t think there was a man in the Chester company that could put you on your back.”

“There is n’t,” muttered Joe Latrobe.

“But you said he did.”

“I did n’t say he belonged to our company, did I? He’s a Jerseyman.”

The tone of the defeated wrestler was so crestfallen that for a moment the doctor was tempted to laugh, but he quickly concealed his feeling and at once began to attend to the injured arm. Both Noah and Caleb waited in the room, lending aid when it was asked for, but the doctor was the only one to speak while he was working.

“There, that will do, Joe,” he said at last. “Better come to see me again in a day or two, but don’t get into any more wrestling bouts before I tell you you may.”

Joe Latrobe did not respond and the three men at once departed. As they walked along the street in the direction of Caleb’s home no one spoke until the house

could be seen, and then the defeated wrestler turned to Noah and solemnly said, "You did that by a trick."

"That's right. So I did," acknowledged Noah, with a smile. "You see you are so much stronger than I am, Joe, that there would n't be any show for me if I did n't try a trick or two. I could n't throw you any other way."

A grin spread over the features of the man as he said, "You'll try it again with me, just as soon as my arm is in shape, won't you?"

"I'd rather leave it as it stands," laughed Noah. "I'm afraid I should n't come off so well next time."

"You'll do it, though?" persisted Joe Latrobe.

"Of course, if you really want me to."

"I do," said Joe Latrobe solemnly; and then bidding Noah and Caleb good-day he started toward his own home.

"Noah," said Caleb eagerly, when the two boys entered the yard in front of his father's house, "you were great! That was the greatest throw I ever saw. The men are all wild about it. There was n't one that believed you could down Joe."

"I'm one of them, too, now," admitted Noah.

"But you did it!"

"I chanced to, that's all."

"It was n't 'chance' at all."

"I don't care what you call it, Cale. I know I don't want to try it again."

"Noah, there's Anthony Wayne in the house!" suddenly exclaimed Caleb in a low voice, as he discovered the young colonel by the window. "What do you fancy he is doing here?"

"Not knowing, I can't say," laughed Noah. "We'll find out when we go in."

Quickly the two boys entered the house and Noah's words were soon confirmed, for the purpose of Anthony Wayne in coming was speedily revealed and Noah Dare was soon aware that he was the most concerned.

CHAPTER XIX

A JERSEY RECRUIT

BEFORE the boys had entered the room in which Anthony Wayne was seated the impulsive young colonel had rushed into the hall, and, seizing Noah by the hand, exclaimed, "I congratulate you, young man! I never thought you would throw Joe Latrobe. Why, man, he's the strongest fellow in the Chester company."

"Thank you," responded Noah quietly. "I did n't think I'd be so fortunate either."

"How did you do it?" persisted the colonel, as the three entered the room and seated themselves.

"You could see it better than I could," laughed Noah. The praise and interest of the dashing leader were very pleasing to him, and the pride which Caleb felt in his cousin's success was manifest in his beaming face.

"I saw Joe's legs waving in the air like a signal of distress," said the colonel, "and then the first thing I knew he was flat on

his back. You must have had him on your hip just where you wanted him."

"That was it, colonel," explained Noah. "His feet could n't touch the ground and I knew my only hope was in lifting him right then. He did n't have any purchase, you see. If he had, you would n't be here talking like this to me."

"That was n't what I came to talk about, young man," said Anthony Wayne quickly. "Not that I don't think you have a right to feel proud of what you've done, for you have, and I'm glad to be among the first to tell you so. But what I want is something else."

Noah gazed inquiringly into the colonel's expressive face, which now was glowing with an enthusiasm that plainly had not been aroused by the wrestler's success in his match with Joe Latrobe, but he did not speak.

"Yes, sir," continued Anthony Wayne eagerly, "I want something different. I am not in the habit of beating about the bush when I want anything nor do I wait for it to come to me. A man is mighty fortunate in this world if he can get even a part of what he asks for. Now, what I

want is for you to be enrolled among my men here in this Chester company."

Noah's face flushed with pleasure, but he was still silent for a moment. To have Colonel Anthony Wayne personally urge him to join his company was an honor which not even he could lightly cast aside. "You forget I'm a Jerseyman," he suggested at last, with a smile.

"No, I don't forget it. You can't help that."

"I don't want to help it. I'm proud of it," retorted Noah.

"That's a matter of taste," laughed the colonel. "Caleb here and I know there is n't such a colony in America as Pennsylvania."

"Not even when it comes to wrestling," remarked Noah dryly.

Anthony Wayne laughed aloud as he said, "That's all right, young man; that's all right. Never mind if you are a Jerseyman, you can enroll here. Your cousin is a member of our company and you are of the same blood, so that will help some. But I want *you*, and I don't care whether you are a Jerseyman or a Hottentot. It is the *man* I want."

“We may have to have a company at Greenwich,” suggested Noah.

“That’s right, I am sure you will.”

“Then my place is there and not here, is n’t it?”

“No, sir; and I’ll tell you why. It will be some time before there will be an enrollment at Greenwich. The Jersey men are a bit slower — mind I’m not saying anything against them, but they are not awake to what is going on yet. I know that we’ve seen only the beginning of this trouble. I am giving myself day and night to getting ready to meet it. Your Jersey people are as true as the Pennsylvanians, but they simply won’t see what is right before their eyes. Then, too, Jersey has more Tories than we have, and they’re bound to make trouble — trouble right at home, too. Now, what I want of you is to have you join us here, and then later when Jersey wakes up, if you feel that you belong there I won’t say a word against it. And you’ll be in all the better shape to help them, if you have had the drill that our men are getting here. Cale will tell you there is something in that,” the colonel added with a laugh, as he turned to the other man in the room.

“Yes, *sir!*” began Caleb eagerly. “There is n’t another such”—

“Oh, I know what Cale thinks about it and about you,” Noah broke in, with a smile. “We say over in Greenwich that Cale can’t for the life of him say two words without bringing in the name of Colonel Anthony Wayne.”

“That’s the way to talk!” said Anthony Wayne, bestowing a resounding thump upon Caleb’s back. “I wish every one of our men had the same spirit.”

“They have! They have, colonel!” responded Caleb eagerly.

“You see, Colonel Wayne,” began Noah once more, “I’m not certain just how long I shall be here in Chester. I came away from Greenwich without making any plans. I may have to”—

“All the better!” retorted the colonel. “All the better, for you’ll work all the harder. You need not be enrolled regularly if you don’t want to. Just come in and share the drill. Now that you have thrown Joe Latrobe, we must still keep a good man in the Chester company or we’ll lose standing. I want you to do this very much, more than I can tell you; and if at any time

you have to leave or go back home, I'll be the last to say one word against it. But we want you, and we want you to begin to-morrow."

"I'll do it," replied Noah, "if that is the understanding. I'm still a Jerseyman you must know"—

"We shan't forget that," laughed Anthony Wayne; "and even if we were likely to, which we are not, you would not let us, if I can judge from your words to-day."

"If my father objects" — began Noah.

"He won't," broke in the colonel sharply. "He'll be glad, he'll be proud of it."

"I am not so certain as to that," remarked Noah quietly.

"You'll report then to-morrow, will you?" Colonel Wayne arose as he spoke, and in his restless manner was already moving toward the door.

"Yes, sir."

"Good! Good! Good-day to you both." Almost before the boys were aware of his departure, Anthony Wayne was gone, and the gate was slammed as the energetic leader passed out from the yard into the street.

"He's a whirlwind," remarked Noah, as the colonel's form disappeared up the street.

“He is two whirlwinds. He’s a whole lot of whirlwinds,” said Caleb proudly. “There is n’t another such man in the colony of Pennsylvania, and I don’t believe there is one to match him in any other colony, either! My, Noah, you ought to feel proud! Just think of throwing Joe Latrobe and being invited by Anthony Wayne in the same day to join our company. Honors are thick for you, Noah.”

“I’m not round-shouldered yet,” laughed Noah. “I have a bit of a strange feeling in one shoulder though,” he added, “but I’ve a notion that Joe Latrobe had something to do with it.”

“Are you hurt, Noah?” demanded Caleb quickly.

“Not a bit,” laughed Noah. “I am just trying to account for the fact that my shoulder feels a bit queer. It may be that the honors I have received, which you were speaking of, or that Joe’s grip on me, may have been the cause.”

So it came to pass that, without being duly enrolled, Noah Dare was nevertheless received as a member of the Chester company. The slight prejudice which was manifested against him at first speedily

departed, for his success in the wrestling match really appealed strongly to the men, whose highest admiration was freely bestowed upon the man who proved himself a master in the "rough-and-tumble" in which those hardy soldiers frequently engaged; and then, too, Noah's quiet ways and unassuming manner, as well as his friendly spirit, soon won for him the friendship of his comrades. He, nevertheless, steadily refused to consent to enter the wrestling matches which the Chester men were eager to arrange for him with the champions of the companies in the adjacent towns. As for Joe Latrobe himself, he speedily became one of Noah's firmest friends. He was like some huge and powerful mastiff, though there were times when Noah was disposed to question the possession of the intelligence by Joe which his canine representative displayed, for the powerful man was slow-witted, and his dullness was as much in evidence as was his wonderful strength of body. The defeated wrestler daily was present at the drill of the Chester company, though weeks passed before he was able to share in its activities again. His friendship for Noah

apparently increased with every passing day, and was the subject of many a comment or jest among the men. But Noah Dare never turned from the man, and his own quick wit saved his duller companion from many a snare.

Noah had written home at once after he had accepted the invitation of Anthony Wayne, and in a few days received a letter from his father, in which permission was granted for him to follow the line he had indicated. Indeed, as the weeks passed and still no word came for Noah to return to Greenwich, the young man's heart began to be sorely troubled. Why was it that he was still left in Chester? Did his father not want him at home? To all such suggestions Caleb's response was that doubtless his uncle had good reasons for not wanting his boy at home, and he also suggested that it was more than probable that the grand jury and Elnathan Todd and Thomas Hull might also have been additional causes for the prolonged stay of Noah at Chester. At all events, Caleb frequently expressed his own delight at the continued presence of his cousin in his home, and Noah also seemed to be content,

for the days were filled with activities that most strongly appealed to him. The drills had become more frequent, and the young Jerseyman soon became one of the most proficient men in the company. His sole break had come on the third day after he had "joined" the company, when his inexperience had led him into an awkward mistake and drawn down upon him one of the frequent angry "blasts" which Anthony Wayne was not slow to bestow upon any man who aroused his ire. And the colonel had been present when Noah had so signally failed in "doing himself proud," as he expressed it.

The words and actions of the colonel were in such marked contrast with the praise he had bestowed upon Noah and the insistence with which he had urged the young Jerseyman to join the company, that Noah's anger was aroused. For several days he sulked like a far more famous warrior than he in the army of the Greeks before the walls of Troy, but Anthony Wayne apparently ignored the hidden anger of the young soldier and laughed and joked with him as he formerly had done.

At last, unable to endure his own feelings any longer, Noah sulkily said to the colonel after the drill one day: "Colonel Wayne, you were mighty hard with me the other day."

"Was I?" inquired Anthony Wayne, his dark eyes twinkling as he spoke.

"Yes, sir, you were. You let out on me right before all the men."

"Then you deserved it."

"I was doing better than most of the men," retorted Noah somewhat bitterly.

"No question at all as to that."

"Then why did you — did you reprimand me as you did right before everybody?"

"Young man, you ought to do a hundred times better than most of the men. If you don't, you deserve all you get and more."

Before Noah could respond the man was gone, but Noah's wounded vanity instantly recovered its wonted composure, while his love and admiration for the dashing leader greatly increased. Indeed, as the days passed, both Noah and Caleb frequently went with the leader on his expeditions to the adjacent towns, in each of

which a company had been raised by Anthony Wayne, and was drilling almost with the faithfulness and zeal of the men at Chester. The colonel's steadfast belief that "trouble was coming" was only in small measure shared by the people, but the man's tireless enthusiasm, his zeal and personal magnetism, were sufficient of themselves to bring a response to his appeal for the formation and preparation of companies of militia. More and more intense became Noah's admiration for the man, until at last even Caleb's words of praise seemed slight beside his own. His love for the colonel was deep and strong, and he never was happier than when he was in his company.

The winter days passed and still Noah Dare remained in Chester. But in the early spring there came a summons so sharp for him to return instantly to Greenwich that his excitement, when he promptly set forth on his journey, accompanied by Caleb, was as strong as the meaning of the word he had received was strange.

CHAPTER XX

STARTLING NEWS

THE promise of warmer days was bright, and the air was soft and balmy when Noah and Caleb landed at the familiar dock at Greenwich. Even Caleb shared in his cousin's enthusiasm when the two boys started up the street toward Mr. Dare's house. It was good to be at home once more, and not even the fear, which had not yet departed, that the action of the grand jury might lead to further trouble, was sufficient to dampen the ardor of Noah and his companion.

"This is great, Cale!" exclaimed Noah enthusiastically. "I did n't know it was such fun to come back home. It almost pays a fellow to leave for a while, just for the sake of what he feels when he gets back."

"I wonder if Elnathan and Tom Hull feel that way about your coming home," suggested Caleb demurely.

"They'll be pleased to see us, you

need n't be afraid about that," laughed Noah. "There is n't a man in Greenwich that'll be more glad to have us here than Tom Hull will be. I don't want any more wrestling matches, Cale, but I don't believe I'd mind it a bit if Elnathan should want to take a fall out of me."

"He won't try it that way, Noah."

"Oh, I don't know about that. He has been smitten on one cheek and now he'd like to turn the other, only he'd rather turn it hard and bang into me with it."

"Don't you worry about that. Noah, there come Elias and Ananias, as sure as you are born!" Caleb broke in abruptly.

The two boys at the same moment caught sight of Noah and Caleb, and with a shout began to run toward their returning friends. In the midst of this noisy greeting, Noah could perceive that his friends were greatly excited and that something more than the mere welcome he and his cousin were receiving was behind the feeling.

"Out with it, Ananias," Noah exclaimed. "What" —

"Is n't it great, Noah?" interrupted Ananias. "Did you ever hear anything like it?"

"I don't know that I ever did," replied Noah demurely; "though I can't say that I know what you are talking about. If you mean Cale and me" —

"I mean the fight at Concord and Lexington," broke in Ananias eagerly. "If that does n't beat" —

"You mean *what?*" interrupted Noah, stopping abruptly and gazing into his friend's face.

"I mean the way the minute-men drove the regulars at Lexington" —

"Tell me about it," said Noah quietly, though his excitement was instantly manifest.

"You don't mean to tell us you have n't heard of that?" demanded Elias.

"Not a word."

"Well, we heard about it only this morning, so perhaps it's not so strange, after all. But they have had a terrible time up near Boston. The Massachusetts men were more stirred up than" —

"Just as much stirred up, you mean, Elias; not a bit more than the Jersey men. That's what you mean, Elias," broke in Noah.

"Yes, I reckon so. Anyway, they were

like a powder magazine and were ready to go off, — and that's just what they did. General Gage had about all he could do to hold on to his regulars in Boston, for the people were as mad as hatters at them anyway. The Provincial Congress had given orders for twenty thousand minute-men to be ready at a 'minute's' call and they had been collecting a lot of military stores at a little place called Concord, about twenty miles out from Boston. General Gage ordered eight hundred of the regulars to go up there in the night and blow up or take all the powder and balls, and he thought the men could march up there in the night and no one would find out what they were up to till it was too late to stop them; but it did n't work just that way. All through the night the minute-men were riding through the country giving warning of what the redcoats were trying to do, and the men were not slow in answering. When the redcoats marched into Lexington, it was just about sunrise, and they found about sixty half-armed minute-men there on the village green. Major Pitcairn ordered the regulars to fire at the minute-men" —

"What!" demanded Caleb, aghast.

“Yes, sir, that’s just what he did!” responded Ananias eagerly, “and that was n’t all he did, either. The major marched his men on to Concord, and the regulars fired at the minute-men there, too, and scattered them.”

“Did they kill any?”

“Yes, sir, they did! Eight men fell when the regulars had fired back at Lexington, and a good many more at Concord, so I hear!”

“Go on, Ananias!” exclaimed Noah, more excited than his friends ever had seen him before.

“I am going on. And that was just what the redcoats did, too. They went on and set fire to all the stuff at Concord, just the way we did to the tea here in Greenwich, and at last they started back for Boston; and according to reports it was about time they did, too, for by this time the minute-men were ready for work. The couriers had carried word of what was going on in every direction, and the church bells were ringing, and all the people were crazy mad. When the redcoats started from Concord they were as fine as they could be, and just laughed at the ‘farmers,’ as they called

the minute-men. But it was a good thing for them they had their laugh then, for they did n't have any chance, even for a grin, afterwards. The minute-men crept along after the regulars, and from behind the stone walls and trees, yes, from behind anything that would be any protection, they kept firing" —

"What! Do you mean to say they fired at the redcoats?" interrupted Caleb.

"'Fire'? I should say they did, and they kept it up, too, so that it was n't very long before General Gage's men were on the run."

"Do you mean that?" demanded Noah, his eyes snapping as he spoke.

"That's the way the report has it, and of course it's true. They were so badly off that at last they sent ahead to Boston for more of the regulars to come to help them, and when they had run as far as Lexington they found about nine hundred redcoats there to join them. But, bless you, it did n't seem to do a bit of good, for the minute-men were mad through and through by this time, and they were hanging on, the way our dogs did to that bear we caught a year ago this winter. Remember that, Noah?"

“Yes. Never mind the dogs. Go on with this fight!”

“The new regulars had brought a cannon, but even that did n’t work long, though of course for a little while it scattered the minute-men, but they did n’t seem to want to keep together, anyway. It gave the redcoats a bit of a chance to rest, though, and the report has it that the soldiers just dropped on the ground and lay with their tongues hanging out like tired dogs. But when they started on again, there were the minute-men hanging to their heels! Every barn, every house, the trees along by the road, the stone walls — everything that was a shelter was the place where some minute-man was hiding, and his gun was busy all the time; and they kept up the chase all day long. At night the regulars, absolutely tired out, got to the water, and there they were right under the protection of the guns of the ships in the harbor. Of course the minute-men could n’t do any more then.”

“Did they go back?” inquired Caleb.

“Some did, but a good many stayed right there to keep watch on the regulars and see that they did n’t start out again.”

"I should not think they would have been afraid of that, just then," said Noah thoughtfully. "Did they shoot many of the regulars?"

"Almost three hundred!" declared Elias.

"What!"

"Yes, sir! That's it. That's what the report says. Three hundred or thereabout."¹

"How many minute-men were in the fight?" inquired Caleb.

"Not over four hundred at any one time. Probably some dropped out and others took their places, but they say there weren't more than that at any one time."

"How many of them were shot?"

"I don't know exactly, but it was less than a hundred, I hear."²

"Who brought the word here?" asked Noah.

"A courier, about four hours ago."

"I wonder how Tom Hull likes that!" exclaimed Caleb.

"I'm not thinking about him. I'm wondering what this will mean for the colonies," said Noah thoughtfully.

"Mean only one thing," said Elias

¹ The British loss was 273 in killed, wounded, and missing.

² The American loss was 88.

lightly. "They'll quit trying to make us drink their tea! They'll find out we can't be scared!"

"I'm scared, and I don't believe they'll quit either," declared Noah. "Will you come on, boys, with us?" he inquired; "I must go home."

"No, we can't stop," replied Ananias. "We'll see you again pretty soon. Why did n't you come home before, Noah?"

Without waiting to explain the cause of their prolonged absence, Noah and his cousin at once hastened on their way, too excited by what they had just heard to engage in any conversation, and in a brief time they had entered the house and received such a welcome as was seldom bestowed in the quiet homes of the colonies.

Before the words of welcome had been all spoken, Noah excitedly said to his father, "Have you heard the news from Boston?"

"Yes, I have heard it," replied Mr. Dare quietly.

"Do you think it's true?"

"Beyond question."

"But—but what will be the next thing?"

“No man knows.”

“What do you think?” persisted Noah.

“I am as certain as I am that you are in this house, that it is only a beginning. The beginning is never as large as the ending.”

“Do you believe there will be a war?”

“This is war.”

“The colonies never can stand up against the British.”

“What did they do at Lexington and Concord?”

“But they can’t keep it up.”

“That remains to be seen. Doubtless most would not agree with me, but I am of the opinion that — Never mind what I think,” Mr. Dare added abruptly. “I fancy you know there is a threatened suit against you for burning the tea this winter?” he inquired.

“Yes, sir.”

“There have been times when I feared it would be pressed, but I’m not afraid now.”

“Why not?” inquired Noah.

“One reason is that this report from Boston will keep men so busy they won’t have any time to give to such troubles as yours.”

“What’s the other?” demanded Noah.

“Mr. Thomas Hull left Greenwich day before yesterday.”

“Where has he gone? What has that to do with our lawsuit?”

“It has much to do with it. He is the one man, besides the Quaker, who was for pressing it, but he’ll not do that now. And I have not seen Elnathan either since Tom — since Mr. Thomas Hull left town. Listen and I’ll explain,” said Mr. Dare with a smile, as he perceived how blank was the expression on the faces of the boys.

CHAPTER XXI

ELNATHAN'S THREE CHEERS

“MR. THOMAS HULL has been the most eager of all the men in Greenwich to have the charges against the young men that burned the tea brought to trial. Just why he should have been so anxious I do not pretend to explain,” said Mr. Dare.

“He’s an ungrateful ” — began Caleb.

“There! That will do! Even in such times as these we do not intend to permit the young people to speak disrespectfully of their elders!” interrupted Mr. Dare sternly.

“I did not mean to be disrespectful,” declared Caleb warmly, “but after all that Noah did for him and for that whining young Quaker, it does seem to me that Mr. Thomas Hull, Esquire, might be in better business than making trouble for the very ones that saved his life.”

“What did Noah do?” inquired Mr. Dare.

Thus bidden, Caleb eagerly related

what had befallen Thomas Hull and Elnathan in their pursuit of the Swallow, and the tale lost nothing of its vividness in the relating.

“You did not write your mother of this, Noah,” said Mr. Dare.

“No, sir. I hardly thought it worth the telling.”

“I agree with Caleb, and Mr. Hull’s actions are the more dastardly in view of what you have told me. He has given himself no rest in his zeal to bring you all to trial, and Elnathan’s father has been as busy as he. It has taken a good deal of patience and time to prevent them from succeeding, too, and I had begun to fear that in spite of all we were able to do you would be compelled to face the jury. But all at once Mr. Hull left Greenwich. His departure, together with the coming of this report from Boston, has made me feel that you have nothing more to fear, at least for a time, and I do not think it will be brought up again.”

“Won’t it if he comes back?” inquired Caleb.

“I do not think so,” replied Mr. Dare, with a smile. “There are likely to be other

matters of greater importance, if not of interest, to Tom Hull."

"What are they?" asked Caleb.

"You will know in due time."

"Do you know where Mr. Thomas Hull is now?" inquired Noah, who up to this time had taken but little part in the conversation.

"I know where he planned to be."

"Where was that?"

"He started for New York. From what I have heard I am of the opinion that he will soon be back here."

"Why won't he go on making trouble for us then?" Noah inquired.

"For the reasons I have stated — and for others. I don't know that I ought to hesitate to explain to you — and yet I think I'll not do so for the present, at least," continued Mr. Dare. "I will tell you this, though, boys: Mr. Hull and the two Quakers are themselves being watched, and I have good reason to believe that they are not likely to be all together at the same time either in New York or here. There may be, too, some ways in which you can help watch the men; but just now there is nothing more to say."

The boys, aware that they had been dismissed from Mr. Dare's presence, were not slow in heeding the hint, and at once left the room. The enthusiasm which their return to Greenwich had aroused was sufficient of itself to busy them for a time. There were old scenes to be visited and old friends to be seen, and the intense feeling which the news from Boston had aroused was sufficient of itself to provide all the excitement which their youthful hearts demanded.

When the second Continental Congress met in Philadelphia ¹ and the reports of its doings began to be learned, the excitement among the people rapidly increased. The first congress had merely passed resolutions, but this second congress began to make what virtually were laws. Many of the royal governors had run away from their places when fighting began and as yet there were no new governments, so that the congress almost by common consent began to make laws, or at least to be looked upon as the governing body of the colonies. At first the feeling of the colonies had been against the British parliament,

¹ May 10, 1775.

though all firmly professed to accept the British king. But when King George sided with the parliament, then the anger of the colonies was turned against the king also, though as yet no declaration of independence had been made.

It was known that the little army of the patriots in front of Boston was really besieging that town and its garrison of regulars which, by the arrival of General Howe, General Burgoyne, and General Clinton with their forces, had been increased to ten thousand men. Men from the farms in many of the colonies had already hastened to the aid of their daring comrades, and the excitement was hardly less keen in the little village of Greenwich than it was in the camp itself.

Noah and his cousin had departed from Mr. Dare's house one morning in June, and meeting their friends Elias and Ananias upon the street, all four stopped to talk concerning the exciting events of the times and report to one another any news or rumors that had been received or heard.

In the midst of their conversation Caleb suddenly exclaimed, "I say, boys, just see who that is coming up the street."

Caleb's three companions instantly glanced in the direction indicated and Noah gave a low whistle as he said, "That's the long-lost Elnathan, as sure as you are born! I have n't seen him for an age. What can we do, boys, to show him that we appreciate his coming back to Greenwich?"

"He does n't seem to want us to do anything," laughed Elias. "He's seen us and he acts as if he had suddenly made up his mind that he has important business somewhere else." The young Quaker had abruptly stopped as he perceived the boys before him, but after a momentary hesitation he crossed the street, and apparently ignoring their presence continued his way on what evidently was the safer side.

"Go and get him!" said Noah suddenly, in a low voice; and instantly Ananias and Elias darted across the street. Once more it seemed as if Elnathan was about to turn and run from the place, but again after a brief hesitation he continued quietly on his way, endeavoring to ignore the approach of the two boys.

"How now, Elnathan?" called Elias

gleefully, as he and his companion advanced upon the young Quaker, who still appeared to be undecided whether to flee or stand his ground. "Welcome home! You are a stranger and a pilgrim, too, I take it from what I hear." As he spoke Elias held forth his hand, which Elnathan reluctantly grasped, and then found himself firmly held, for Elias did not relax his hold, and at the same time Ananias darted forward and took a position close to Elnathan and directly behind him.

"Welcome! Welcome!" shouted Elias, in tones that might have been heard a hundred yards away. "Welcome! Welcome!" he repeated, as he thrust his left arm under Elnathan's right and firmly held to his grasp.

"Thee let me go! I will tell thy father!" shouted Elnathan angrily.

"Thank you! Please do so," said Elias, imitating the tones of the angry and alarmed young Quaker. "Do so by all means, Friend Elnathan. Nay, we will go with thee and we will assist thee, for verily we hath fear lest thy poor stammering tongue may not be able to tell all. It hath been so in the past and we very much

feareth lest it may be so — Here! Quit that!” Elias suddenly added as Elnathan made an attempt to break from the hold of the two boys. “We just can’t let you tear yourself away.”

“Yea, we are attached to thee, thou whited sepulchre!” joined in Ananias, in his deepest tones. “Do that again and I’ll tie your feet up!” he added in more natural tones, as the young Quaker kicked viciously in his attempt to free himself.

“Why, here’s Elnathan Todd!” exclaimed Noah in mock surprise, as he and Caleb crossed the street and joined their friends. “When did you come home? And how is Tom Hull? And has his negro wench had any returns of her strange malady?”

“I am surprised, Elnathan,” joined in Caleb. “Did I hear that you had been to Boston and that General Howe had told you if you would stay he would n’t have any need of the regulars, for no one would think of coming into Boston if you were there? Is that really so, Elnathan?”

The young Quaker scowled, but made no response.

“Where did you come from, Elnathan?” demanded Elias.

"I came from Philadelphia last night," responded Elnathan sulkily.

"What's the news from the congress?" inquired Noah eagerly.

"Bid thy friends remove their hands and I will tell thee."

"Much to tell?"

"Yea, thou wilt think so when thou hearest."

"Then remove your hands, you boys," said Noah. "You don't have to do it, you understand, for all this peaceful Quaker wanted was for me to 'tell' you to do that. Still if he really has anything to say you'd better do it, and then if he does n't carry out his part of the bargain you can put them on him again — hard."

With a laugh Elias and Ananias let go the prisoner, and then Elnathan, angrily facing the quartette, said, "There is news that will doubtless interest such — such" —

"Never mind that," suggested Noah, in his sweetest tones. "We understand just what you want to say. Go on and tell us what the news is."

"Thy rebel congress hath adopted the army and hath appointed a man to be in command of it."

“Is that true, Elnathan?” demanded Noah excitedly.

“Verily.”

“Who is the commander-in-chief?”

“George Washington.”

“Why don’t you say ‘Friend George’?” demanded Ananias mockingly.

“He is neither a Friend nor is he a true friend to the colonies, as you will have good cause to learn soon. When King George” —

“Elnathan, there is something I want you to do,” broke in Noah abruptly.

The young Quaker looked inquiringly at the boy, but did not speak.

“Say ‘Hurrah for General George Washington’ and say it loud!” demanded Noah.

“I never will!” retorted the young Quaker, closing his mouth firmly.

“Oh, yes, you will; you’ll say it and you’ll say it right now and three times, too.”

“I will not. Thou can’st not” —

“Oh, yes, I ‘can’st.’ I want to whisper in your ear, Elnathan. Watch him, boys, and don’t let him bite me,” Noah added, as he glanced at his companions quizzically; and then stepping forward to El-

nathan's side he whispered in the young Quaker's ear and then stepped quickly back.

The change in Elnathan was as remarkable as it was instantaneous. His face was white and there was an expression of fear in his eyes as well.

"Now, say it!" demanded Noah.

"Hurrah for George Washington," said Elnathan feebly.

"Oh, louder! Louder! And don't forget to put in the 'General,' too," suggested Noah.

"Hurrah for General George Washington!" said Elnathan.

"Louder yet!"

"Hurrah for General George Washington!" shouted the Quaker.

"Pretty good! Now, once more! Speak it right out loud this time. There comes Tom Hull up the street and he'll want to hear how nicely you can say it. Speak up, my gentle Quaker, and don't forget that Tom Hull must hear."

"Hurrah for General George Washington!" shouted Elnathan, this time to the complete satisfaction of Noah Dare.

CHAPTER XXII

TAR AND A TORY

THOMAS HULL, who by this time had drawn near the place where the group was standing, stopped and stared at the boys as if the shout which Elnathan had raised was too startling for him to comprehend.

“Good-day to you, Mr. Thomas Hull,” called Noah glibly. “Will you join us in our celebration? We have not been able to keep Elnathan quiet. He has hurrahed for General George Washington four times and every time he roars louder and louder. You try it, Mr. Hull. Maybe you can keep him quiet.”

“Elnathan Todd, what does this mean?” demanded the man, ignoring the bantering words of Noah.

“Thee knows I have no love for these rebels!” began Elnathan, his face flushed with anger and his words almost choking him. “They — they have compelled me to” —

“What!” exclaimed Noah warningly.

“Thee has done it! Thee knows thee has!” repeated Elnathan, now made bolder by the presence of Thomas Hull.

“Thee are a — a” —

“Yes, I know I am,” interrupted Noah meekly. “But you must n’t blame me for that. I can’t help it; it’s the way I was born.”

His companions shouted with delight, although the expression on Noah’s face was unchanged. Thomas Hull was almost beside himself with rage. He glared at the boys as if he was tempted to lay hands upon them, but apparently his anger instead of frightening them, only served to increase their delight.

“’T would do the heart of the new general good,” laughed Elias, “if he could hear even the Quakers cheering for him. Mr. Hull,” he added, “why don’t you send General George Washington some of your tea?”

“George Washington, the traitor, will be sent where he’ll have no need of tea!” declared Mr. Hull, his face now almost purple.

“Where’s that? To Boston?” inquired Ananias mockingly.

“No, sir! He’ll be shipped along with some more of you to the West Indies.”

“Oh, no, he won’t,” said Noah soothingly, and his companions again laughed loudly.

“I tell you he will!” shouted Thomas Hull. “He will! He will! That’s what’s to be done with all the rebels. They told me so in New York.”

“Have you been to New York, Mr. Hull?” broke in Noah.

“It does n’t matter where I have been!” retorted the man, now so angry that, like other men whose rage has overmastered them, he did not realize how foolishly he was speaking. “I’m here now” —

“Are you here?” again broke in Noah.

“You are an impudent young — young — young” —

“What is a ‘young — young — young,’ Mr. Thomas Hull?” inquired Ananias sweetly.

“It’s a boy that ought to be behind the prison bars, that’s what it is!” shouted the man, waving his arms wildly and glaring at the boys as he spoke. “And what’s more, that’s where he will be, too! We’ll see if there is any respect left in Jersey for the law of the land! We’ll see if they

can burn up the tea that belongs to others! We'll see."

"Was that tea yours?" inquired Elias sharply.

"Yes, sir, it was — at least a part of it was, and I don't care who knows it! I had paid for my share and you burned it. The grand jury said you did, and if I had you in New York, I'd — I'd — I'd " — Apparently words failed the man and his threat was not completed.

"What would you do with us if you had us in New York?" asked Noah.

"I'd have you treated as you deserved to be! And if I did what I ought to do I'd take you now and place you right across my knees."

"Me! Me! Please take me!" pleaded Noah, as his friends again laughed loudly.

Once more Thomas Hull seemed to lose all control of himself, though for a reason which perhaps he himself perceived clearly he did not attempt to carry out his threat. He glared at Noah for a moment in a silence that was eloquent, and then he shouted: "You are all a pack of curs! The king will punish you as you deserve, you impudent young — young" —

“We beg your pardon, Mr. Hull,” broke in Noah, “but that is n’t fair. We told you we could n’t help being ‘young-yongs.’ But I’d rather be a ‘young-young’ than be a Tory. I’d stand up for my friends anyway! I’d never go crawling after the men you crawl after, Mr. Hull! I never liked a jackal, though I can’t say I ever saw one — but I have seen a skunk and I’ve killed a good many adders!”

“You — you — impudent young — young” — began the man again; but the shouts of the four boys interrupted him, and speechless with rage, he stooped and seized a club which chanced to be near him on the street, and, flinging it with all his strength at Noah, it struck the boy beneath his left eye, inflicting a gash from which the blood instantly began to pour down his face.

Before any one could speak, the three boys rushed upon the man and roughly seized him; but before they could inflict any harm Noah said quickly, “No, boys, don’t hurt him! Let him go!”

Noah’s friends reluctantly yielded, and Thomas Hull and Elnathan turned away as if they were about to depart from the

place, but they had advanced only a few steps when the man halted abruptly and turning again to the boys, who had not moved, he shouted, as he shook his fist at them, "That's only a taste of what you will get! Yes, you and that rebel father of yours, Noah Dare! He's as bad as the rest of you, and he was the one who set you on to burn the tea! I wish I had the old villain right where he belongs! He would n't have any need of being sent to England or to the West Indies for trial! His neck can be stretched right here in Greenwich" —

The shouting of the man abruptly ceased as Noah quickly darted ahead and, seizing the Tory in his hands, angrily turned him about. "You may say what you please about me, but you shall not talk that way about my father, and you would not, either, if he were here. As he is n't here, I'm going to do my best to take his place. Now then, Mr. Thomas Hull, Esquire, let me hear you say right out loud, 'Joseph Dare is the best man in Greenwich!'" As he spoke Noah had slipped his right hand to the back of Mr. Hull's neck and his grip tightened so that his prisoner winced, for

he was no match in physical strength with his angry young captor.

“Joseph Dare is the worst rebel in Greenwich. Ouch! Ouch! Oh! Oh!” screamed Thomas Hull, as the grip on his neck instantly tightened.

“Say it!” demanded Noah sternly.

“Joseph Dare — is — is” — stammered the man.

“Is what?”

“Joseph Dare i-i-is the — the — *best* rebel in Greenwich!” groaned the man.

“That’s all right. Now say ‘Hurrah for General George Washington!’”

“I won’t!” screamed the man. “Yes! Yes! Yes! I will. I’ll say it!” he added, as the pressure instantly became stronger on his neck.

“Say it, then!”

“Hurrah for General George Washington!”

“Good! Now say, ‘Hurrah for the boys that burned the tea!’”

“I w-w-won’t! Ye-e-e-s, I w-will, too,” he squealed, as the warning was repeated. “I’ll say it. Let go my neck, you young — young” —

“Don’t call me that name again,”

warned Noah solemnly. "Now say what I told you!"

"Hurrah for the tea burners!" gurgled Thomas Hull.

"There! That will do, Mr. Thomas Hull, Esquire," said Noah quietly, as he thrust the man from him. "Now, go home and keep quiet or the 'young-youngs' will get you."

Thomas Hull and Elnathan at once departed, the former talking excitedly and frequently shaking his fist, in a manner that seemed to delight the four boys, who remained standing where they had been upon the street and watched the departing Tories until they could no longer be seen.

"I don't wonder that Tom Hull hurrahed for the tea burners," laughed Elias. "I'd do it myself if Noah Dare had his grip on the back of my neck."

"So would I," assented Caleb quickly. "You ought to have seen Noah throw Joe Latrobe," he added. "Joe was the best wrestler in the Chester company."

Caleb was compelled to relate the story of his cousin's success in the wrestling match, and as the boys walked along the

street the comments of Elias and Ananias were as warm as even the admiring Caleb could desire, which is saying much.

At the home of Mr. Dare the boys parted, Noah and his cousin at once entering the house. As soon as Noah learned that his father was there, he and his cousin at once sought him and related all that had occurred in the meeting with Mr. Hull and Elnathan. To Noah's surprise his father had but little to say of what his boy had done, for his interest and excitement over the report of the action of the congress in adopting the army around Boston as its own, and appointing Colonel Washington of Virginia as the commander-in-chief was too great to permit even such matters as at one time would have deeply stirred him, now to affect him.

Two days afterward, just after the dusk had fallen, a crowd of thirty or more men and boys had assembled in front of the home of Thomas Hull. This time there were no disguises, and an onlooker might easily have recognized in the assembly many of those who had worn the garb of the Indians at the bonfire. This time, too, there were older men present, and there

was manifest a spirit of determination that indicated that something of deep seriousness had led to the assembling of the men.

In response to the demand of one of the company, who had been sent to the door of Mr. Hull's house, the Tory appeared. The sight of the body of men in his yard caused him hastily to turn back, but he was not permitted to reënter his home. When the trembling man had been led out in front of the assembly, one of the older men stepped forward and in stern tones demanded, "We, your former friends and neighbors, Thomas Hull, have come to inquire if you will renounce your wicked ways. You have been in New York and Philadelphia" —

"And I'll go again whenever I want to," screamed Thomas Hull.

"We know what you were doing there," continued the speaker, as if there had not been any interruption. "Now, because of your former standing here, we are willing to give you one more opportunity to show yourself a man. We are standing for our rights. We will not tolerate the presence here of any one who is a traitor."

"I'm not a traitor," again interrupted

the terrified man. "You are the traitors! Every one of you is a traitor to King George and the parliament! I'll not take back a word I said. I detest you, every one of you base-born Jersey clowns! You" —

"He's going to call us 'young-youngs,'" whispered a young man who strikingly resembled Noah Dare, to another of the assembled men, who in his appearance was very like Caleb. The latter, however, was not given an opportunity to respond, for there was a quick movement on the part of the crowd. A lane was opened, and then, to the surprise of the younger ones in the assemblage, a wagon, drawn by six men, was brought forward, and in the midst of it a kettle of tar was seen.

Thomas Hull, screaming, struggling, pleading, was lifted into the wagon, and then, despite his wild cries, he was stripped to his waist. A coat of tar was applied to his body, and this, in turn, was covered with feathers. Then a dozen men seized the rope, among whom were the four boys, and the Tory was drawn to a place half a mile beyond the boundaries of the village. There he was permitted to leave the wagon and was sternly told never to return. To

Greenwich itself Thomas Hull never came back, but Noah Dare, not long afterward, met him face to face under circumstances in which the elder man decided that his opportunity to repay his slights had come.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE ADVANCE

THE excitement in the little Jersey town continued unabated for several days, and then, when the reports of the battle of Bunker Hill were added to the rumors which had been confirmed that Ethan Allen and his daring followers had captured Fort Ticonderoga, and that the stores secured there had been sent on to the army at Boston, the patriots were almost beside themselves. No one seemed to consider what the end was to be, and as yet there were not many who were decidedly in favor of cutting loose from the mother country. They were simply contending for their rights, and though Lord North, the evil adviser of the king, might need to be checked, and against him they would do their utmost, there were few who were expressing any sentiments of disloyalty to King George himself. For the greater part, the determined colonists believed that as soon as the king was aware that "his subjects in

America" were not likely to submit to injustice, he then would alter his demands and cease to oppress them.

It is doubtful, though, if such considerations were largely in the minds of many in the Jersey village of Greenwich. Boys and men alike had been aroused by the determination their fellow patriots had manifested, and were preparing to do their utmost to assist. Men, powder and supplies were being forwarded from New Jersey to Cambridge, as they were from most of the colonies also, and the chief topic of conversation on the streets, in the homes and even in the churches, was that which was concerned with the prevailing excitement of the times.

In the Dare homestead there was no exception, and at last there came a morning when the thoughts which long had been in the minds of Noah and his cousin could no longer be unexpressed. The family had not yet risen from their seats at the breakfast table when Noah said quietly: "Pop, do you not think Cale and I ought to take our part?"

"In what?" responded Mr. Dare, without glancing at the boys. Caleb, who had

been watching Mr. Dare's face while his uncle was speaking, could see that it suddenly became drawn and white, and when he glanced quickly at his aunt he saw that the tears were streaming down her face though she did not speak. There was a lump in his own throat, too, which he was unable to swallow, but Noah had not once looked up and it was impossible to perceive how he was affected.

"You know what I mean," said Noah, still looking down at the table.

"Yes, my son, I think I do," said Mr. Dare. "I knew it must come, and your mother and I have already talked it all over."

"We shan't have to be gone long," declared Noah eagerly. "This trouble will soon be ended, and we'll be all the better after it's settled."

There was a trace of a smile on Mr. Dare's face, though its presence served chiefly to intensify the sorrow in his heart.

"I do not agree with you, Noah," said Mr. Dare firmly, "but neither you nor I can prophesy what the end will be. What are your plans, Noah?"

"I don't know that we have any plans."

"You surely have talked with Caleb."

“Yes, sir,” acknowledged Noah a little awkwardly. “We thought that as he and I were already in one of Colonel Anthony Wayne’s companies, it might be best for us to report to him and”—

“Cease to be a Jerseyman?” interrupted Mr. Dare.

“No, sir. I’m always a Jerseyman and always shall be. But, you see, Cale and I could still be together, and that would be better on a good many accounts. If I were needed in Jersey, why I’m sure I could”—

“You would have to stay where you were, Noah,” again Mr. Dare broke in.

“Yes, sir, I fancy I should,” acknowledged Noah lamely.

“And yet you prefer to go with Anthony Wayne?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Why?”

“It is n’t because he’s a Pennsylvanian and not a Jerseyman,” said Noah quickly. “It’s because we know him and like him and want to be where he is. Besides, we’re both enrolled in the Chester company.”

“I hear he’s a dreadful man,” spoke up Mrs. Dare, who until this time had not taken any part in the conversation. “He’s

always fighting and is a regular fire-eater. He would take you into all sorts of danger, I know he would, Noah."

Noah looked up and saw that his mother's eyes were shining, and his own voice was low as he replied, "That may be true, but it will be as safe where Anthony Wayne is as in any other place; for though he may be, as you say, a man to get into danger, he's a man to get out of it, too, and that's more than can be said for some of the leaders."

"Noah," said his father, "why can't you be satisfied to do what Elias and Ananias are going to do?"

Noah was already aware of the tasks to which his two boy friends had been assigned, for the proposed plan had been a frequent topic of conversation among them. Patrol boats were to be kept busy watching the entrance to Delaware Bay, and both Ananias and Elias had already been selected with others for this duty. Indeed Noah had already promised his friends that they might use his little cat-boat, the Swallow, and had assisted in fitting her out for the task to which she had been assigned.

"I think I ought to go where I'm enrolled," he said at last.

"Very well. I shall not object," said Mr. Dare quietly.

The matter was settled now, as both Noah and his cousin were aware. For a moment no one at the table spoke and the silence became so oppressive that Caleb felt that he could endure it no longer. His uneasiness apparently imparted itself to the others, and the entire family abruptly rose and passed out of the dining-room in silence.

Three days afterward the two boys were ready to depart. Noah had visited again and again every familiar spot on his father's place. The barn in which he had been accustomed to assemble with his friends, his own horse that he had broken, the dog which had been his constant companion, even the sleek and well-fed cattle all seemed somehow to appear differently in his eyes now. He was a sturdy lad and not much given to a display of his feelings, but his heart, though he repressed every expression of his feelings, was not light when the morning at last came when he was to say good-by to his fam-

ily and the familiar scenes of his boyhood, and go forth he knew not where with the men who with Anthony Wayne were to take their part in the struggle for the liberties of an oppressed people.

The face of Mr. Dare looked like that of one who had been through a long illness. He seldom spoke at the breakfast table, though when he did his words did not reveal the fear or sadness that possessed him. As for Mrs. Dare, somewhat to Noah's surprise, she betrayed but little emotion, and Noah was too inexperienced to understand what her repression was costing her in suffering.

"Very likely when you are in the camp of Anthony Wayne you will find some old friends and will make many new ones," Mr. Dare was saying. "There is one thing, Noah, of which I have never had a doubt, and that is, no matter where or with whom you are, you will not forget what you have learned in your father's home. I would rather hear of you dead than to hear of you as untrue to what you have been taught."

Noah looked at his father with shining eyes, but he did not respond, though Mr.

Dare was none the less comforted by the glance he received.

“If it be God’s will that you fall, Noah,” Mrs. Dare was saying, “then I shall try to bear it because it is His will. There is one thing though, my boy, which I do not think I ever could bear.”

“What is that?” inquired Noah softly.

“That you should be shot in the hinder parts,” responded his mother, and the sudden flash in her eyes was all that was required to make Noah Dare once more master of himself. It was all new to him, this unexpected fire and strength his mother was displaying. He had looked for her to break down, and he had been fearful of the effect of the moment of parting upon his own strength of heart. He still little knew what all this was costing the gentle little mother whose ways, far more affectionate than were those of most of the women of her day, had never failed to appeal to him.

At last, however, the good-byes were all said and the two cousins were gone. Not once had they glanced behind them on their way to the dock where Elias and Ananias were to meet them and bring back

the Swallow, after Noah and Caleb had been landed in Philadelphia, for the new task which was to be theirs. On the voyage the spirits of all four boys were restored, and when at last Noah and Caleb were once more in Chester the excitement there, and the knowledge that the sterner part of their duties had now begun, soon imparted an eagerness to be at work that was novel and inspiring as well.

For some unexplained reason there was a delay in sending Anthony Wayne's men forward. Others of the Pennsylvania and New Jersey line had long since arrived at Cambridge, and letters from them had been received describing the life in the camp and the excitement that attended the siege of Boston. But the summer passed, the autumn came, and still there was a delay. All of Anthony Wayne's eagerness did not appear to avail, and his men still were held in the Pennsylvania town.

At last in the winter, after reports of what Benedict Arnold was attempting to gain by his siege of Quebec, the long-awaited word was received, but even then for some reason still unexplained the men were not to proceed to New York together,

but a small detachment was ordered forward and then, after a delay, others would receive word to advance. The winter was upon them when at last the company in which Noah and Caleb were enrolled started on its march across New Jersey. Their immediate destination was to be Elizabethtown, where if the weather was not too forbidding, they were to be transported to New York by vessels which would be awaiting them on the Kill von Kull.

There were few events of interest on the wearisome march across New Jersey. In every place where they halted for a night there were those who were eager to minister to their wants, and the fires of patriotism evidently were burning high among the Jersey people.

In the afternoon of the fourth day the little company arrived at Elizabethtown, and no sooner had it broken ranks than Noah was surprised when an elderly man approached him and touching the young soldier upon his shoulder inquired, —

“Is your name Noah Dare?”

“Yes, sir,” responded Noah in surprise.

“Then there is a word awaiting you from some one in Greenwich.”

Visions of trouble, of sorrow, even of death in his father's home instantly flashed into Noah's mind, and he eagerly followed the stranger as he led the way along the shore. In no way suspicious, he stepped on board a sloop that was lying at a dock many yards distant from the spot where his company had broken ranks, but as he entered the cabin he found himself face to face with Thomas Hull.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE CHARMING POLLY

WHEN Noah had entered the cabin his conductor had hastily stepped back, and as he departed he had closed and locked the door, leaving the young soldier alone with the man whose enmity he had reason to believe was more intense than ever it had been. As Noah looked into the face of the man standing before him his worst fears were confirmed, for the look of hatred was too plain to be mistaken.

“What does this mean, Mr. Thomas Hull?” Noah demanded at last, breaking in upon the intense silence. “I was told that a man from Greenwich was here and that he had a message for me.” He was aware that his own face was colorless, and the great fear in his heart was not hidden.

“That’s right. There *is* a man from Greenwich here,” said Thomas Hull.

“Who is he?”

“His name is Thomas Hull.”

“What is your message?” Noah was striving to speak calmly, but his voice was trembling despite his efforts to control it.

“I am authorized to invite you to go on a voyage to the West Indies, where you will receive your just deserts. There is no longer any regard for law in these miserable colonies, so you must go where you will be certain to find it. This sloop is the Charming Polly, her captain is one Jacob Twiss, and there is n’t a better sailor in America. Will you accept of the invitation?” Thomas Hull laughed as he spoke, though there was no trace of mirth in the sounds he made.

“Never!” shouted Noah. “I’ll never go with such a cowardly” —

“Careful,” broke in Thomas Hull warningly.

Instantly Noah turned and in his desperation tried to open the door, but the lock held, and he was quickly aware that his efforts were vain. He rushed to the little porthole and swung back the covering, and shouted again and again. His words were carried out over the bay, and he was quickly aware that his attempts to call his friends were without avail. He

could hear the sounds of men running about on the deck above, but apparently they had not heard his cries, or at least they gave them no heed. Almost beside himself with a nameless terror, he turned once more upon the man in the cabin, who had watched him in his desperate attempts without once interrupting him, and savagely said, —

“I’ll make you open that door, you traitor! I’m a member of Colonel Anthony Wayne’s battalion, and I’ll show you what it means for you to lay hands on one of his men in this fashion!”

As he spoke Noah sprang toward the man in the cabin, and Thomas Hull evading the grasp said quickly, —

“One minute, Noah Dare! Just wait” —

“I’ll not wait!” shouted Noah, “I’ll ” —

“Wait! Wait! I’ll tell you!” exclaimed the man, as Noah seized him.

“Tell it! Tell it, then!” responded the young soldier, his hold on the man tightening as he spoke; and at the same time he swung him about so that he was enabled to look upon his face.

“You can kill me if you want to,” gasped Thomas Hull.

“I know it, and you deserve just that! What is it you are to say? Be quick about it, or I’ll not answer for the consequences.”

“I’ll tell you. You are known on this sloop. The papers of the grand jury are in the hands of Captain Twiss. He knows, too, that we two are alone in this cabin. If anything happens to me he will know who did it, and if you think that will help you when you are brought to justice for burning the tea, then all I can say is that you are a fool, and I don’t believe even you are such a piece of foolishness as to want that!”

Noah’s grasp on the man relaxed, and for an instant he stared helplessly into the face of Thomas Hull. The man was not such an arrant coward as he had believed, after all. At all events he had been bold enough to be left alone in the cabin with him when he must have been aware that by such an action he would be in peril of bodily harm, for the young soldier would well-nigh be desperate when he was fully aware of his predicament. There was truth, too, in what the man was saying, Noah clearly perceived. He surely was in a desperate plight, but his troubles would only be increased by the action he was threatening to take.

Quick to see his advantage, Thomas Hull stepped back and smilingly said, "I thought you would come to your senses."

"Why are you doing this?" demanded Noah slowly.

"Why am I doing it?" That's a fine question for you to ask! Who burned my tea? That was robbery, worse than highway robbery, too! Who — who made me suffer the indignity of being stripped to my waist and being covered with that — that tar and all those feathers" — The man's face was distorted with passion, and his voice, which had risen to a shrill scream, was broken in the rage which possessed him.

"If you refer to me," responded Noah, "I did not give you your coat of tar and feathers."

"You did! You did! I saw you with my own eyes."

"Whose eyes would you expect to see with?" retorted Noah. "I tell you I had nothing to do with it. I was there with the crowd in front of your home, and I did help haul the wagon, but I thought you would be glad to be as far away as you could and as soon as you could, too."

"Yes, you did," shouted the man. "You

were one of the ring-leaders! I saw you! And that was n't all you did, either."

"No, it was n't, that's a fact, Mr. Thomas Hull," retorted Noah, who now was aware of the need of caution on his own part if he were to find any way to escape. "There was something else that I did, too."

"What was that?"

"I pulled you out of the water in Delaware Bay. If I had left you there, as I now see I ought to have done, you would n't be here doing what you are now."

"Don't bring that up to me!" shouted Thomas Hull. "You need n't whine or cry. You own up that you burned my tea, and you say yourself that you helped to drag me out of Greenwich." A contortion of rage appeared on the face of the infuriated man, and for a moment even his utterance seemed to be choked. Quickly he recovered control of himself and continued: "So long as I live I'll never cease trying to bring the men who treated me that way to justice! I believe you were the leader and you'll be the first. This sloop is bound for the West Indies, and I'm bound you shall go along with her."

“Are you going, too, Mr. Thomas Hull?”

“I am.”

“What’s that?” suddenly demanded Noah, as sounds on the deck came to his ears.

“I fancy they are already hoisting the sails,” responded Thomas Hull maliciously. “The tide will be right for us to sail about sunset, and that can’t be more than an hour or two away. I think I’ll go up on deck and see for myself,” he added, as he thrust his hand into his pocket, and drawing forth a key approached the door.

“Mr. Hull,” pleaded Noah frantically. “You can’t mean it! You can’t! You can’t! You are not really going to take me to the West Indies!”

“I surely am,” responded the man glibly, as he stepped to the door which he at once unlocked.

“Mr. Hull! Mr. Hull!” called Noah.

“Well! What is it now?” Thomas Hull stopped in the open doorway and faced his prisoner, as if he were almost daring Noah to do what plainly was in the desperate young soldier’s mind — to attempt to flee from the cabin.

“Will you come back and tell me when we start?”

“There ’ll be slight need of that,” laughed Thomas Hull brutally. In a moment he had stepped outside, closed and locked the door, and Noah Dare was left alone in the cabin of the Charming Polly.

Almost as if his reason had fled, the young prisoner frantically shook the door and again and again called for help. He had no means of knowing whether or not his cries were heard, but as the moments passed slowly he became aware that no response at least was to be made to them. Rushing to the porthole he peered out across the waters. About a mile away he could see the opposite shore of the bay, but not a boat or a man was within sight. There was no help to be expected from that quarter. His friends were farther down the same shore near which the sloop was anchored, but it would be impossible to make them hear. He was held fast a prisoner in the cabin.

He stopped abruptly, and once more listened to the sounds from the deck. The noise and confusion were great, and there could be but one explanation, — the Charming Polly was indeed preparing to

set sail. Again he peered from the port-hole and was aware that the sun already had disappeared. The waters were filled with pieces of floating ice, and from the direction in which they were moving he was enabled to perceive that even now the tide was strong and was going out. In a brief time the sloop would be sailing down the lower bay, and when once she had passed the Narrows every hope of escape would be gone.

Seating himself on the bunk, Noah endeavored to think more calmly of his predicament, but though he remained silent for a long time not a ray of light appeared. He had every reason to believe that Thomas Hull would be true to his word, and would assuredly fulfill his threat to carry him to the West Indies. And there "justice" would be measured out to him. The steadily deepening darkness of the on-coming night was like the gloom in his own heart. He blamed himself for having so easily been led into the trap. And how foolish he had been. The mere word of a stranger had induced him to follow, and now he was where there was no prospect of escape. He thought of Caleb and

wondered what his cousin was saying concerning his disappearance. And then his thoughts turned to the little village of Greenwich. It seemed to him that he could almost see the members of his family at that very hour assembling about the supper table. The vision was almost more than Noah could endure, and the young soldier arose and again approached the little porthole.

The sloop was under motion already! Almost dazed by the knowledge, Noah stood and listened to the sounds he could hear as the floating ice crushed against the vessel. He was also dimly aware that the *Charming Polly* was frequently turning in her course, and although he was not familiar with the channel he at once concluded that it must be a winding course that led to the sea, but the knowledge somehow now seemed of slight interest, for Noah Dare was dazed and numb and scarcely realized what was occurring.

He turned abruptly as he heard a key in the lock of the door. In the dim light he could see that a man entered the cabin and carefully closed and locked the door behind him, but it was not until he spoke

that Noah recognized Thomas Hull. Without hesitating an instant, he sprang to the man's side, threw his arms about Mr. Hull's neck and forced his visitor back upon the bunk.

CHAPTER XXV

THE SHORE

So excited was the young prisoner that he was hardly aware of his own predicament. In his grasp he was holding the man who had been the cause of all his troubles, and his own anger was so intense that for the moment his sole thought was of vengeance. Come what might he would at least measure all the punishment due the Tory who had trapped him on the Charming Polly.

A sudden lurch of the sloop threw Noah back against the side of the cabin, and with the motion his hold on the man was broken. Instantly Thomas Hull sprang from the bunk and made for the door, but before he was able to use the key the prisoner was again upon him. Exerting all his strength, Noah lifted the man bodily and flung him once more upon the bunk.

“Help! Help! I’m being” — shouted Thomas Hull, but before his cry was completed Noah Dare’s hand was roughly

placed upon the man's mouth, and the scream was silenced.

Fearful lest the cry had been heard by the sailors, Noah, trembling in his excitement, expecting every moment to hear the sounds of men at the door, instantly tore away the neckerchief from his prisoner, and, savagely warning the man not to repeat his call for help, speedily bound Thomas Hull's hands behind his back. In spite of his own excitement Noah wondered at the helplessness of his prisoner, for his strength seemed to be gone and no resistance was made, nor did he repeat his call. His own neckerchief provided Noah with the means of preventing any further possibility of shouts or calls, for he securely bound the cloth about Thomas Hull's face, covering his mouth and leaving him free to breathe through his nose only.

Noah was working in desperation now, although he had not formed any plan as to what he would next do. Indeed, he was conscious of a feeling that he was making a huge mistake, anyway, and that, as the *Charming Polly* already had started on her voyage to the West Indies, and appar-

ently all hope of leaving the sloop before her arrival at the distant islands was gone, he would pay dearly for his treatment of the man who was now with him in the cabin. The feeling of anger, however, was too intense to permit him to act calmly or even to stop for thought, and as soon as he had secured the man, he thrust his hand into the pocket of Thomas Hull and drew forth a key which he was convinced was the one he desired.

“Now, then, Thomas Hull,” he said, as he stopped for a moment and gazed in the dim light at the helpless figure in the bunk, “don’t you try to make any fuss while I’m gone. If you do, whatever may happen to me I’ll make for this cabin and see that you get your just deserts. Do you hear me?”

Whether or not Thomas Hull heard the words of the young soldier, he did not respond, and Noah turned quickly to the door. For a moment he paused and listened intently. If Thomas Hull’s cry for help had been heard on the deck a response would have been given before this time, Noah assured himself, and then, too, in this early stage of the voyage it would not be

probable that any of the officers or crew would trouble themselves concerning their passenger, Thomas Hull, or the prisoner he had secured by beguiling him on board the *Charming Polly*. Indeed, it was not in the least likely that any of the sailors knew anything of the matter at all, and with the thought came a momentary feeling of returning confidence to the desperate young soldier.

Hesitating no longer, Noah thrust the key into the lock, and then returning for a moment to the bunk to convince himself that Thomas Hull was still securely bound, and that he need have no immediate fear of any action on his prisoner's part, he returned hastily to the door, turned the key, and then stepped softly outside. Not a man could be seen, though he could hear more plainly now the noises on the deck; and satisfied that his exit had not been perceived, Noah securely fastened the door, placed the key in his pocket, and started up the companion way to the deck above.

As he stepped upon the deck he could see not far away the indistinct outlines of the shore, and a momentary thrill passed

over him as he realized that the Charming Polly had not as yet passed out through the Narrows. A gleam of hope stirred in the young soldier's heart, but his fears instantly returned when a man placed his hand on his shoulder and said, "How's your young rebel making out, Tom? Is he any more" — The speaker paused abruptly, and uttering a low exclamation peered into Noah's face with an astonishment that was manifest though it could not be clearly seen.

Terrified by the action of the man, Noah Dare roughly threw off the hand from his shoulder, and without pausing to think of the peril that awaited him, ran swiftly to the rail and leaped far out into the water. Before his feet touched the cold waters he heard the shout of the startled man on the deck, and then he could neither see nor hear any more. His feet struck a mass of floating ice which gave way before him, and he was sliding into the cold waters of the bay.

When at last he arose again to the surface he was almost strangling. His clothing was like a heavy weight, the floating ice seemed to bar his way to the shore, and

the chill of the plunge he had taken seemed almost to drive his very breath from his body. It was not long, however, before he recovered a measure of self-control, and glancing at the sloop he was not able to perceive any signs that she was about to stop in her course. He was convinced that he heard a shout, but this was not repeated, and instantly Noah exerted himself to the utmost of his strength as he struck out toward the shore he had dimly seen from the deck of the sloop.

He speedily discovered that all his strength was required to avoid the masses of floating ice and even to keep his head above the water. It was not long before he realized that the tide was running out swiftly, and a great fear that he would never be able to gain the shore swept over him. In desperation he began to strike out more vigorously, but he speedily discovered that his strength might soon fail him. Striving to be calm, he then decided not to struggle against the tide, but rather to guide himself in the swiftly flowing current so that at least he might be borne in nearer the shore. Nor was he able to see the shore itself in the darkness, and as if to add to

the desperate nature of his plight, he was twice severely bruised by a block of ice striking him with force. His hands soon were so stiff that there was slight feeling left in them. His clothing held him back and almost dragged him down, but it was impossible for him to rid himself of any part of it.

It was not long before the powerful young swimmer began to feel that his strength was leaving him. The blackness before his vision was steadily deepening, and his strokes were less sweeping and more frequent. The Charming Polly and her crew, even Thomas Hull and his dastardly work, were all forgotten. The one purpose in his mind was the gaining of the shore — the invisible, far-away shore, of which he obtained a faint glimpse when he had sought the deck of the sloop. Even all idea of time was gone now, and Noah could not determine whether he had been days in the water — or was it only hours? His arms and legs were still moving but he felt no sensation in them. The work of swimming was mechanical, and with every passing moment was becoming more difficult. There was a vague feeling in Noah's

mind that the end of all his exertions could not be far distant now, but the shore apparently was no nearer than when he had leaped over the rail of the Charming Polly.

Suddenly Noah felt something hard beneath his feet. He was too nearly exhausted to rejoice, and yet despite his weariness a vague sense of relief came to him. He tried again and found that his impression was correct — he was able to stand and the water scarcely came up to his chest. The floating ice was still threatening and he was compelled to guard against its blows, but nevertheless he gained a brief respite though his teeth were chattering and his body was trembling as with an ague. But he could see the shore before him! There could be no question as to its nearness now, for not more than twenty yards away it loomed up in the night.

Quickly he pressed forward, but when he had covered a third of the distance he cried aloud when his feet suddenly failed to find the bottom. Instantly he was aware that he had been wading across a sand-bar, and that between the bar and the

shore deep water still remained to be crossed. The sight of the shore itself — now not more than thirty-five feet distant — aroused all his remaining spirit of determination, and with renewed courage he struck out once more. How it was that he covered the distance Noah, afterward in recalling his thrilling experience, was never able to understand, but somehow cover it he did. Blindly, his breath coming in gasps, his body numb, his hands without feeling, he at last fell stumbling on the curving beach and staggered back from the water. He fell panting upon the sands, pressing his hands to his dripping sides, at first aware only that he had escaped from his peril in the great deep.

It was not long, however, before the intense cold caused him to realize that another danger yet remained, and that if he would escape freezing he must quickly bestir himself. With difficulty he staggered into an upright position, and then looked carefully all about him. The fear of the sloop was gone now, for she could not be seen and doubtless had sailed on, her captain assured that Tom Hull's prisoner had gone where no search for him would avail.

Not far up the shore Noah suddenly perceived a faint light. It might be the glimmer of a candle he assured himself, and at once began to move in its direction. Painfully, slowly, every step apparently requiring an exertion of his entire strength, Noah Dare stumbled forward, and at last perceived a small house or hut before him. His surmise had been correct, he instantly concluded, and the light he had seen had been the beams of a candle shining in some room in a near-by house. Even then the fear lest the folk within might be enemies, for the Tories in and about New York were said to be numerous, caused him to halt for a moment, but the bitter cold soon compelled him to go forward. And yet all his caution was not gone, and he stealthily crept up beneath the window and peered within.

He beheld four people, two of them seated at a table, and a man and a woman, who were perhaps the parents of the younger ones, were also there, apparently leaving the room. Though Noah could not hear what was said, it was evident that the two at the table were excitedly talking. Whether friends or foes Noah decided that they would at least receive him into the

room, so tempting with its candle light and the glow of the burning logs on the fireplace, and he hastily stepped to the door and announced his presence by the great iron knocker which he could scarcely feel when his hand grasped it.

CHAPTER XXVI

A WELCOME

IN response to Noah's feeble summons the door was soon opened, and the young soldier beheld before him a man not much older than himself. The candle which Noah perceived in the hands of the man also revealed the face of a young girl peering over the latter's shoulder, and in spite of his weariness the young soldier was impressed by the striking resemblance between the two and instantly concluded that they were brother and sister. The faces of both were not unkind in their expression, but there was manifest not only a curiosity at the unexpected summons, but also a slight fear which could be readily seen in the eyes of the girl.

"Can you let me come into your house long enough for me to dry my clothing?" inquired Noah at last, his teeth chattering as he spoke.

"Surely," responded the young man quietly. "Are you alone?"

“Yes, sir.”

“Come in.”

Noah at once entered the house, and when the door had been closed and the young host had led the way into the room where he and his sister had been seated, he again held aloft the candle, and his surprise was manifest as he became aware of the plight of his unexpected visitor.

“You have need of drying yourself,” he remarked quietly. “You are as wet as if you had been in the bay.”

“I have been,” replied Noah quietly.

The interest of the girl was keen now, but as yet she had not spoken. Her brother, however, was not slow to express his surprise. “You have?” he demanded. “How did that happen on such a night as this?”

“I’ll tell you as soon as I can talk a little better,” Noah replied.

“That’s right!” broke in the girl, now speaking for the first time since Noah’s entrance into the room. “You must pardon my brother,” she explained, with a laugh to her visitor. “Samuel has been so busy to-day that he is not quite awake. He was talking of going to his bed when

you knocked. Now, Sam, you must take this — this” — she paused inquiringly.

“My name is Noah Dare,” explained the visitor.

“And mine is Rachel Wheeler, and this is my brother Samuel,” she added, as she turned to her brother.

Noah bowed low, and then despite his suffering laughed in response to the merry light in the girl’s eyes. It was already plain to him that the brother was a sober, sedate young man and that his sister, of whom he was evidently very fond, was accustomed to take her own way with him.

“Sam,” Rachel said quickly, “you must take our visitor to your room and give him a change of clothing. It may not fit you very well, kind sir,” she said again laughingly to Noah, “but I have a fancy that almost anything will be better than what you are now wearing. And you say you have been in the water all day?”

“Not all day — but long enough,” responded Noah.

“A minute is too long in such weather as this,” said Rachel. “Now, Samuel Wheeler, you do as I say and take this

young man to your room, and while you are gone I will myself see to it that something hot for him to drink is prepared. Did you say you would like some tea?" she demanded of her visitor.

"I do not drink tea."

"No more do we," laughed the girl, and Noah laughed also as he followed Samuel, who led the way to a room above, where in a brief time the young soldier had donned dry garments. It is true that Samuel's clothing dangled somewhat loosely from Noah's frame, for the young host was at least four inches taller than his visitor; but the relief was so great that not even the laughter, which Noah was convinced would appear in Rachel's dark eyes when he returned to the room below, had sufficient influence to deter him.

At last when the two young men re-entered the room Rachel did indeed laugh as she looked at Noah's garments, but there was only a feeling of friendliness in it all, and Noah laughed also as he held up his hands over which the long sleeves of the coat he was wearing had been turned back.

"I think we might have done better to

put you to bed," said the girl. "You look as if you were ready for it. I did not notice before."

"Yes," said Noah. "I am ready, but there is no bed for me till I am in New York."

"You do not go to New York to-night!" said Rachel quickly.

"When am I to go?"

"To-morrow if you are recovered."

"I am recovered!" said Noah fervently. "I thought I was never" — He stopped abruptly as he became aware of what he was saying. There was no knowledge as yet on his part whether these people were friendly to the king or to the colonies. As for himself, though they might not have known just where to place him, still his uniform was of a character to show that he was no redcoat at least. He glanced apprehensively at the door as a sudden gust of wind shook it, and his action was not lost upon the girl, for she smiled sympathetically as if she understood. She said no more at the time, but at once placed before her visitor the food she had prepared, and both she and her brother exchanged glances as they watched their visitor.

At last, greatly refreshed, Noah arose from his seat and standing in front of the fireplace said simply, "I thank you, I thank you both for what you have done for me."

"You are welcome — every soldier of Washington would be welcome," said the girl warmly.

"You are not Tories, I fancy," said Noah.

"Do we look like Tories?" demanded Rachel, her eyes flashing as she spoke.

"Not like those I have seen," replied Noah thoughtfully.

"What kind have you seen?" inquired Samuel.

"There is only one kind. Listen, I'll tell you," said Noah, and he related what had befallen him after his arrival at the point below Elizabethtown. The interest of his hearers was keen, as he was at once aware, and when his story, or at least the part of it which he related, was completed, Rachel's face was glowing with interest and excitement.

"Sam," she said quickly, "do you think there is any chance of men from the Charming Polly coming here to-night?"

“I do not know,” replied her brother.

“Let them come!” said the girl, her excitement instantly increasing. “I can call father and that will make four of us! We can beat off any band of” —

“I do not think the Charming Polly will stop,” broke in Noah. “I was only a passenger anyway, and she will not want to lose the tide. But I am now ready to go on to New York and join my company, so you will not be in fear of anything if the crew should chance to come.”

“Pray, kind sir, tell me how you are to go to New York to-night?”

“I’ll walk.”

“Across the Kills?”

“Am I on an island?” demanded Noah in surprise.

“Yes, kind sir, you are. This is Staten Island. Now, then, pray tell me how you are to walk to New York?”

“I’ll find some one to ferry me” —

“You mean you’ll let some one find you. Let me tell you, Noah Dare, that not all the people on Staten Island are so friendly to you as is the family of Jeremiah Wheeler.”

“Can’t I do it?”

“You cannot, sir. You will have to put up with such poor comforts as we can give you till to-morrow, and then my brother will take you in his boat. You are going to town to-morrow morning, Sam?” she inquired of her brother. Noah was unable to see the glance which Rachel gave her brother as she spoke, but Samuel’s reply was of a kind that quickly solved the young soldier’s problem.

“I will take you in the morning,” he said quietly.

“But I would not make trouble for you to-night,” protested Noah. “It may be that a search will be made” —

Noah stopped abruptly as the heavy knocker on the door sounded loudly. His first thought was of flight, as he was instantly aware of the white face of Rachel staring at her brother. In spite of the boldness of her words, it was evident that she was alarmed by the summons. Noah Dare turned to look for an exit from the rear of the room, but instantly recalling how he himself had peered into the room before he had sought admittance he concluded that, whoever the visitors might be, they doubtless had done as he had, and if they

were seeking him it was now too late for him to escape. The door, meanwhile, had not been opened, and as the knocker again sounded loudly Rachel fled from the room. Despite his own fear Noah smiled as he watched the girl as she sped up the stairway in the hall, and somehow there was no feeling of anger in his heart over her desertion.

Samuel Wheeler now approached and opened the door, and instantly two men entered the room, one of whom was Thomas Hull and the other doubtless one of the officers of the *Charming Polly*.

“There he is! There he is!” shouted Thomas Hull. “He *did* make the shore! I told you he would! We have him now!” In spite of his bold words, the man did not make any attempt to seize Noah, who was steadily regarding the newcomers, though his face was a trifle paler than its customary hue.

“This man has a warrant for him,” explained Thomas Hull’s companion as he pointed at Noah. “We were given charge of him and he leaped from the deck of the *Charming Polly* not more than two hours ago. We did not think he could ever gain the shore, but this man,” and

he indicated Thomas Hull as he spoke, "insisted that he might do it, for he is a daring and hardy fellow; so at last the captain agreed, and we hove to and sent a boat ashore. We separated to make a search, and the other men will be here in a few minutes. He is a dangerous man and you are well rid of him."

"What has he done?" inquired Samuel Wheeler.

"Done?" almost shouted Thomas Hull. "Done? He has done almost everything! He set fire to my property! He gave me a coat" —

"Tell what your property, as you term it, was, Mr. Thomas Hull," interrupted Noah.

"It does n't make any difference what it was!" shouted Thomas Hull. "He set fire to it! He — he" —

"Tell what it was," again broke in Noah.

"Don't stop to parley. Take him! Why don't you take him?" shouted Thomas Hull. "I told you he was a desperate man! We have him" —

Thomas Hull stopped abruptly, and Noah himself glanced quickly behind him as the sound of approaching footsteps was heard.

CHAPTER XXVII

A DEMAND

ENTERING the room was Rachel Wheeler, and at her side was a strong, rugged-visaged man who Noah instantly concluded must be her father, so marked was the resemblance between them. For a moment Mr. Wheeler gazed partly in anger at the men in his house, and then sternly demanded: "What is the meaning of this disturbance? What do you want in my house?"

"We are sorry to trouble you, sir," explained Thomas Hull's companion, "but you are harboring a very dangerous man," and he indicated Noah as he spoke. "This fellow," he continued, "escaped from the Charming Polly and has sought refuge here in your house. If it please you we will take him back with us and leave our apologies with you for disturbing you at such an hour."

"You say you have a warrant for this man?" demanded Mr. Wheeler, glancing at Noah as he spoke.

“Yes, sir.”

“Let me see it.”

Thomas Hull's companion drew forth a paper from his pocket and without a word handed it to Mr. Wheeler. Not a word was spoken as the latter took the document and advanced to the table, and, holding a candle in his hand, carefully read the paper which he spread out before him. Noah glanced at Rachel, but the girl was so intent in watching her father that she did not respond or even perceive the young soldier's uneasiness. Thomas Hull, near to his companion, was plainly excited despite his silence, and even Samuel Wheeler was manifestly perplexed, and was eagerly regarding the paper which his father re-read carefully before he looked up again at the group in the room.

“This is no warrant,” said Mr. Wheeler at last. “Even if it were you would have no right to arrest this man here. We are in the colony of New York now, and your Jersey papers may not be served here. Besides, as I told you this is no warrant. You cannot take the man on this.”

“What is the paper, father?” inquired Rachel quickly.

“Thy woman’s tongue will ask strange questions,” responded Mr. Wheeler dryly. “I do not mind telling thee though, that to me it seems to be a copy of an indictment which has been made — let me see, some time in last November or December,” he added, as again he opened the document and glanced at its date. “It is for burning some tea in the village of Greenwich in West Jersey. But there are a score of names,” he added, “against whom the charge is brought. Have you secured the others?” he demanded, as he looked sharply at Thomas Hull.

“No, sir. Not yet,” replied Noah’s enemy.

“Are you a sheriff?”

“I am not.”

“Then by what right do you demand that this man should go with you?”

“Because he is a young” —

“He’s always calling me a ‘young-young,’” interrupted Noah lightly, for he had been greatly relieved by the attitude Rachel’s father had assumed.

“Be silent!” said Mr. Wheeler sternly.

Abashed by the sharp rebuke, Noah was glad that the light was so dim that the flush

which quickly spread over his face could not be seen by the people in the room, and especially that Rachel's dark eyes could not perceive his confusion.

"It is right," assented Thomas Hull warmly. "This fellow is a dangerous man and you will be well rid of him. He has done little but make trouble for the past months, and if we take him with us we can promise you that he will not be able to do" —

"Where would you take him?" broke in Mr. Wheeler.

"To the West Indies."

"I do not know who you are, nor do I know this young man," said Mr. Wheeler quietly, as he glanced at Noah, "but nevertheless I am able to tell you one thing. Never, so long as my boy and I are able to lift our hands, will you take him against his will. Do you desire to go with them?" he added, as he turned and looked Noah full in the face.

"No, sir; I do not," replied Noah.

"You hear him, gentlemen. That settles it."

"You will not give him up to us?" demanded Thomas Hull, in loud tones.

"I will not," said Mr. Wheeler quietly.

"*You* may save yourself a deal of trouble," suggested Thomas Hull's companion. "You know we have other men on the island. They are now searching for this fellow. They may be here at any moment. You are likely to save" —

"I would save myself further speech with you, gentlemen," broke in Mr. Wheeler abruptly. "I will save that by saving your presence. I bid you good-evening, gentlemen!"

"But — but" — began Thomas Hull eagerly.

"But me no buts!" said Mr. Wheeler sternly. "There is no more to be said." As he spoke he advanced to the door and flung it open, and then, with his hand still on the latch, faced the two men.

Thomas Hull glanced maliciously at Noah, and it is to be feared that what he saw in the young man's face did not tend to his peace of mind. There was, however, no further opportunity afforded for the expression of his feelings, for his companion, a grin on his face, moved toward the door, and Thomas Hull was perforce compelled to follow his example.

As soon as the two men had departed, Mr. Wheeler turned sharply to Noah and said, "Is it true that you burned the tea as that paper declared?"

"Yes, sir."

"Why did you do it?" demanded Mr. Wheeler sharply.

"Why did the Boston men do what they did?" retorted Noah. "Why did the men at Annapolis" —

"What others did may not justify you in such deeds," interrupted Mr. Wheeler sharply. "I do not approve of what our rulers did, but their mistakes cannot make such deeds as yours lawful. We can and will protest, but for one I am utterly opposed to such works as those of Ethan Allen at Fort Ti, or of such a madcap march as that of Benedict Arnold against Quebec. That is going too far!"

"Do you approve of the army at Boston?" demanded Noah a little warmly.

"I do and I do not. The first thing we know, some of our zealous men will be for having the colonies set up for themselves. I love the mother country, though I do not believe in her attempt to oppress us."

"You believe in the army but you don't

believe in letting it do anything. Is that it?" inquired Noah.

"I do not know just what I do believe. These are terrible times, but when it comes to letting men come to my house and seize any one there on any such flabby pretense as these two men had to-night, I'll stand against them as if I were the united army of the colonies."

"Father, do you think they'll come back here?" inquired Rachel.

"I do not, child," replied Mr. Wheeler, in such a manner that Noah was at once made aware of the man's profound affection for his daughter. And perhaps the young soldier was not altogether surprised at his discovery.

"I am glad," said Rachel simply; and the young soldier was aware also of another fact as he heard her words, which was that, to the young girl, her father's word was the court of last resort from which there was no appeal.

"I thank you, Mr. Wheeler, for your kindness to me," said Noah at last, "but I would like to go on to New York now, so that I need not put your family to any more inconvenience. If these men should return"—

“Did I not say they would not come back?” demanded Mr. Wheeler quickly.

“Yes, sir.”

“Then say no more. In the morning my son will take you to New York, and you can then resume your place among the men of that madcap Anthony Wayne.”

How did the man know that he was one of Anthony Wayne’s men? thought Noah. And, too, how did he know that the colonel was a “madcap?” He glanced at Rachel, but her face did not betray anything, and he had no means of knowing what else she might have said to her father when in her haste she had sought his room.

“’Tis time we all were in bed,” remarked Mr. Wheeler. “It must be half after nine o’ the clock. I do not know why it is that my children should keep such unreasonable hours. But they always do.”

“Before you go, father, you must listen to some words I was reading in the ‘Pennsylvania Evening Post’ which Sam brought home to-day,” demanded Rachel.

“What is it this time?” inquired Mr. Wheeler quizzically, at once relenting at the request. “Has Patrick Henry been called a traitor again or has John Adams

or King Hancock had an attack of modesty?"

"'T is neither," laughed Rachel. "It is a poem" —

"I care not for your poetry, lass. In times like these" —

"But you will care for this, you surely will. 'T is really a song to the tune of 'An Old Courtier of the Queen and the Queen's Old Courtier' — The name of it is 'The King's Own Regulars and their Triumph over the Irregulars.' I do not really believe it was written by one of the redcoats, though it sounds very much as if it were, and recites what they were saying on their way back from Concord and Lexington when the minute-men were after them."

"Read it, lass, if you must."

The girl, in the tune or recitative chant in which the song to which she had referred was sung, at once began: —

"For fifteen miles they followed and pulled us, we scarce had
time to pull a trigger,

But did you ever know a retreat performed with more vigor?

For we did it in two hours, which saved us from perdition;

'T was not in *going out* but in *returning* consisted our *expedition*.

"Says our general, 'We were forced to take to our *arms* in our
defense

(For *arms* read *legs* and it will be both truth and sense);

Good Percy (says he) I must say something of him in civility,
And that is — I can never praise him enough for his great —
agility.’

“Of their firing from behind fences, he makes a *great* pother,
Every fence has two sides; they made use of one, we only forgot
to use the other;

That we turned our backs and ran away so fast; don’t let that
disgrace us,

’T was only to make good what Sandwich said that the Yankees
could not *face* us.

“As they could not go before us, how could they look us in the
face?

We took care they should n’t by scampering away apace,
That they had not much to brag of is a very plain case,
For if they beat us in the *fight*, we beat them in the *race*.”

“Is that not fine poetry, father?” demanded Rachel merrily.

“I doubt not it is, lass,” assented Mr. Wheeler, “though I am no judge of such things. But I am a judge of time, and off to bed you go.”

To the surprise of Noah, however, the man bade him and Samuel remain after Rachel’s departure from the room, and as soon as he spoke both young men were instantly alert.

CHAPTER XXVIII

REJOINING THE CHESTER COMPANY

“I DO not think it wise or safe for you to remain here longer,” said Mr. Wheeler to Noah.

“You think these men will come back?” inquired Samuel quickly.

“They may.”

“I would not trouble you” — began Noah eagerly.

“Speak not of trouble. There is so much of that, we mind not a little more or less. It is of yourself I am speaking. Samuel, do you take this young man and go to your Uncle Reuben’s. ’T is only to the north shore,” Mr. Wheeler explained to Noah. “You will be safer there and nearer the place you are seeking. In the morning Samuel can take you directly across to New York.”

Somehow the feeling of disappointment in Noah’s heart at the thought of departing was keener than was his own feeling of fear at remaining in Mr. Wheeler’s house,

It may have been that Rachel Wheeler was the cause, but as Noah did not explain no one has ever known. At all events, the young soldier made no protest to the suggestion of Rachel's father, and in a brief time, with his wet clothing carried in a bundle over his shoulder, Noah set forth from the place with Samuel.

The desperate exertions which Noah had made in the water and his excitement at the unexpected appearance of Thomas Hull in the house were now having their natural reaction, and it was with flagging footsteps he followed his companion. Both were watchful and cast frequent glances in the direction of the place where the Charming Polly might be waiting for the return of her missing men. The vessel, however, could not be seen nor was there any indication that their own movements were observed, and when an hour had elapsed the young men arrived at the place they were seeking. No lights were to be seen in the house, but, in response to the loud knocking of Samuel, a window was soon raised, and a head crowned by a nightcap peered forth, and a voice demanded the cause of a disturbance at such an unseemly hour.

Samuel's explanation instantly quieted the fears of his uncle, whose voice had been the one to greet them, and in a brief time they were admitted into the house, and not long afterward both young men were sleeping soundly.

Refreshed by the rest he had obtained, and by the ample breakfast which Samuel's aunt provided on the following morning, Noah's spirits were high and he was eagerly looking forward to the time when he could rejoin Caleb, who now doubtless was in New York and sorely perplexed by the unexplained absence of his cousin.

It was barely daybreak when, in a huge punt or yawl which had been equipped with a sail, Noah and Samuel set forth. The heavy boat had been selected on account of its strength and ability to withstand the blows of floating ice, but the wind had shifted in the night, and that fact, together with the tide, made the course much clearer than it had been in the preceding evening. It was without any difficulty or delay that at last the young men landed at the foot of Whitehall and Samuel at once prepared to return.

"I wish I were going with you," he said somewhat ruefully.

"I wish you were," responded Noah eagerly. He was now dressed in the uniform of Anthony Wayne's men, for his clothing had been dried before the fireplace on the preceding night at the house of Samuel's uncle. The white frock or blouse and the round hat which he wore were still somewhat striking in their appearance, despite the young soldier's recent experience.

"Why don't you come, Samuel?" he continued eagerly.

"My father objects."

"He's not a Tory, is he? He did n't talk like one."

"Tory! You don't know him," laughed Samuel. "No, sir, he's no Tory, but still he does n't believe in taking arms against the king."

"What would he do? How would he do it?"

"That I can't say because I don't know. He would oppose me in joining the militia though, I am sure of that."

"Perhaps he'll feel different after awhile."

"Yes, maybe he will. Good-by," Samuel

added. "If you get a chance come over to Staten Island and see us again."

"I'll do that and thank you," responded Noah eagerly. "And tell your sister how it was that I did not have any chance to express my thanks to her for her kindness."

"I'll tell her," said Samuel quietly, and at once he set forth on his return to his uncle's house on the border of the island, which Noah could plainly see as he stood for a time on the dock and watched the departing yawl.

When the little boat had gone a considerable distance down the bay, Noah turned to the street in which people were already to be seen. Where he was to find his comrades he had not the slightest idea. That they must be somewhere in New York he was convinced, for the boats by which they were to be brought from Elizabethtown Point he had himself seen in the preceding afternoon before he accepted the "invitation," which had placed him on board the *Charming Polly* and left him in the power of Thomas Hull.

Across the street he observed a man who was apparently keenly watching him, and in a moment Noah recognized Joe Latrobe.

The man was alone, and what he was doing there at that early hour the young soldier had no means of knowing.

Quickly crossing to the place where Joe was standing, Noah hailed him and said, "Where are our men, Joe?"

"Is that you, Noah Dare?" demanded Joe Latrobe slowly.

"Did you think I was George Washington?" laughed Noah. "Yes, I'm Noah Dare, and if you don't believe it I'll put you on your back right here in the street, if you must be convinced."

"I don't think you can do that."

"I did it once, anyway, did n't I, Joe?"

"Yes. You can't do it again." A grin was beginning to appear on the dull face of the man, and apparently his good nature was unruffled by the reference to his defeat.

"I can tell you one thing, Joe, I'm not going to try it," said Noah quickly. "What are you doing down here on this dock at this time in the morning?"

"Looking for you."

"Honestly?"

"Yes," responded Joe solemnly.

"What do you want of me?"

"I want to know where you are."

“I’m right here. Can’t you see for yourself, Joe?”

“Yes, I see.”

By dint of many questions Noah at last learned that the man had indeed come, as he had declared, in search of his missing comrade. The strange and sudden disappearance of Noah had been a source of wonderment to his friends, and as soon as the men had been landed in New York Caleb had at once sought Anthony Wayne and reported the loss to him. A search had been made, but as we know its results had been fruitless, and early in the morning Joe Latrobe had sought and obtained permission to return to Elizabethtown where Noah had last been seen, and strive to learn if possible what had become of the missing member of the Chester company. The pleasure of the dull and honest-hearted fellow was so manifest at the discovery of his friend that Noah’s heart was deeply touched, although he did not explain what had befallen him.

“Where are our men now, Joe?” he inquired.

“They’re some in one place and some in another.”

“I did n’t suppose they were all in the *same* place, Joe,” laughed Noah. “But where is Caleb?”

“He’s busy making camp.”

“Where?”

“Up yonder,” responded Joe solemnly, as he jerked a huge thumb toward some indefinite region that lay behind his back.

“All right. Come on. We’ll go there now.”

Joe Latrobe offered no protest, and the two men at once set forth in the direction that had been indicated. Noah was deeply interested in all that he beheld, for it was the first time he had ever been in New York, and the differences he observed between the town and Philadelphia were most interesting to him, although the Quaker town to him seemed to be far in advance in many points. Joe was not inclined to talk, and appeared to be content now that he had found his missing comrade, and it was not until they had passed on beyond the residences that Noah became aware that they were in the open country. He then discovered that the soldiers, or at least a goodly part of them, had been stationed there, and the few tents which

the colonel's forces possessed were being put to a good use. The morning was cold and clear, and the sight of smoke rising from the fires over which some of the men were preparing their simple breakfast was in itself an evidence of the new life upon which he himself was about to enter, and Noah's interest was now keen.

It was not long before Noah and his companion arrived at the place where his immediate friends were busy in the task of making their camp, and Caleb himself was soon discovered.

"You're a great man, Noah Dare!" exclaimed Caleb, relieved by the sight of his cousin and yet partly angry now as well. "We did n't know whether you had been captured or had deserted."

"Where is Colonel Wayne, Cale?" inquired Noah, ignoring his cousin's words.

"Somewhere."

"That's not strange. But where is he? I must see him."

"He rode past here a little while ago. He'll not be very far from his own camp-fire, you may be assured of that, unless" —

"There he is," said Joe Latrobe, pointing as he spoke to a place not far above the

spot where the city hall now stands, and where the colonel himself could be seen engaged in conversation with another officer.

"I'll be back soon, Cale," said Noah, as he quickly turned away and sought the leader.

When the young soldier drew near the colonel he became aware that Anthony Wayne was furiously angry. He was talking in loud tones, his face was flushed, and his arms were almost as much in action as if he were beating a drum.

Noah Dare stopped when he came within a few yards of the angry man, not deeming it expedient to make his presence known at such an inopportune moment. Anthony Wayne, however, chancing to glance behind him, discovered the young soldier, and instantly turned upon him.

"What do you mean?" he shouted. "I don't know whether to have you shot or shut you up in the guardhouse!"

CHAPTER XXIX

NOAH DARE'S ANGER

FOR a moment Noah Dare stared in confusion at his leader. His own eagerness to see the dashing colonel and explain to him the reasons for his failure to arrive with his company had been so strong that not once had it occurred to him that any other interpretation might be given. Assured of his own devotion, the mere possibility that his presence and explanation would not serve to account for his loyalty had not even suggested itself to the young soldier. His confusion apparently only served to quicken the anger of the young colonel, who hastily concluded that his pet soldier, for so Noah had been good-naturedly termed by the colonel's men, had failed him at the critical moment.

“What have you to say for yourself?” demanded Anthony Wayne loudly.

“I can explain” — began Noah quietly.

“No doubt! No doubt!” interrupted the colonel sharply. “I never yet saw a man

who was good at dodging who could n't find plenty of excuses. Of course it was some other man who was to blame, now was n't it? Answer me."

"Yes, sir, it was."

"Ah, ha! I knew it!" laughed Anthony Wayne derisively. "It is always so."

"But, Colonel Wayne" — began Noah in desperation.

"I have no time to listen to your tales. The only redeeming thing is that you have shown up at last, though not in the best of form. Look at your hat! See your jacket. *My* men never come to me in such a plight. I shall not send you to the guardhouse as you deserve — this time. Nay, I have no time and less inclination to listen to your words," he added almost savagely, as Noah made as if he were about to speak again. "Take yourself back to your company and report where you belong, though first it might be well for you to look to yourself and see that you make yourself presentable."

Colonel Anthony Wayne at once turned and abruptly left the discomfited young soldier. And Noah Dare was angry. That Colonel Wayne, who had been free with his men even when he had most strenu-

ously insisted upon strict discipline, should now give him not even a chance to vindicate himself, seemed to Noah so unjust that for the moment all his feeling of love and admiration for his dashing colonel was banished by the rage that possessed him. It was brutal, it was unfair, to brand him without listening to one word of explanation. When Noah recalled the desperate nature of the plight in which he had been, his own courage in making his escape from the Charming Polly, the attempt of Thomas Hull to retake him, and the kindness of the Wheelers in assisting him to make his way to New York, whither he had been so eager to go, it almost seemed to him for the moment as if it would have been better to let Thomas Hull carry out his own plans. The West Indies could have had no greater disgrace than that which had befallen him. And doubtless, too, Rachel Wheeler would hear of the anger of his colonel, and he would be disgraced in her eyes as well as in those of his comrades. It was the more difficult for the young soldier to bear because of the marked favor with which Anthony Wayne had formerly regarded him. His record

as a wrestler, his success in the drill, and his promptness as well as his pride in being enrolled among the men of the battalion of which Anthony Wayne was the colonel, had brought Noah Dare to a position in which he was well pleased with himself, to state it mildly. But now everything had been shattered by the injustice of the impulsive leader, and when Noah Dare turned and walked slowly back to the place where he had left Caleb, his feeling of bitterness against Anthony Wayne was almost as strong as his former feeling of admiration and devotion had been. There was not a doubt in the mind of the troubled young soldier that every man in his company would soon be aware of the disgrace that had been heaped upon him, and his own knowledge of his innocence, and his confidence in his ability to clear himself of the unreasonable charge the angry colonel had made against him, only served to increase his anger.

Fortunately neither Caleb, nor Joe Latrobe, who was with him, apparently was aware of the young soldier's feelings when the latter joined them; and Caleb said quickly, "We're detailed to cut some wood

for our camp-fire, Noah. Here's an axe for you, and we are to go into the woods and get all we need. Come along! What did Colonel Wayne have to say to you?" he added, as his cousin took the axe which Caleb held forth and the three men at once started toward the woods above New York.

"He did n't say anything," replied Noah, and he was about to add that the unreasonable colonel would not permit him to say anything either; but thinking better of his impulse, he refrained from referring to his own troubles.

"He's a great man, I tell you!" continued Caleb. "He's already arranging for you to have a bout with the best wrestler in the" —

"No, he is n't!" broke in Noah angrily.

"Why yes, he is, Noah," protested Caleb. "I heard him talking about it myself last night. He was asking me, too, why you were not here."

"Did you tell him?"

"No. I did n't know then, you see."

"Sure you did n't, Cale?"

"Of course not," responded Calebeagerly.

"But, Noah," he continued, still unaware

of any change in his cousin's feelings, "is n't all this great that we're hearing?"

"I have n't heard much," said Noah.

"Why, about General Montgomery taking Montreal, and now Benedict Arnold very likely has Quebec too by this time. You know he's a perfect dare-devil, they say, and he marched from Cambridge right up through the forests in the dead of winter. He's bound to get Quebec, and then we'll have the whole of Canada right with us in this struggle. 'T is n't likely Lord North or even King George himself will keep up the work of taxing us without representation when all of North America stands together, as we're bound to do, just as soon as Quebec has fallen. And they say, too, there is n't a ghost of a show for the redcoats in Boston. They're bound to evacuate, for our men have Boston shut in on every side now."

"And what'll be done in case the redcoats do leave there?"

"Why — why, I don't just know. Probably that will bring things to a" —

"It'll 'bring things,' Cale, no doubt about that, and it'll bring them in a plenty, too," said Noah soberly.

"But is n't it great, Noah?" persisted Caleb.

"Yes, but what are we to do?"

"Stay here in New York and keep the Tories quiet. From what I hear there are plenty of them, too."

"Suppose the redcoats leave Boston, as you say they will, and come on here?"

"That's just what a good many say they will do."

"Do they?" inquired Noah absently.

The conversation ceased, for the three men had arrived at the place they were seeking and at once began their task of securing firewood. Some of the soldiers had been comfortably quartered, but others were compelled to shift for themselves. Some had tents, but many made their own rude huts, and for a protection from the cold were obliged to fell the trees and provide great camp-fires around which the men assembled for warmth. When off duty the men, especially those of the Pennsylvania line, engaged in the popular rough and tumble sports, or told tales of the French and Indian wars, or amused themselves after the fashion of the times. As not all of Anthony Wayne's men were even

provided with muskets, the task of guarding the patriotic people of New York from the depredations of the angry Tories was confined to a small portion of the soldiers.

Several days elapsed in this manner, and only once had Noah Dare been compelled to serve as guard. At night he assembled with others of his comrades about the camp-fire of Anthony Wayne's men, but he seldom spoke, and steadily persisted in his refusal to join in the wrestling bouts in which many of the hardy soldiers delightedly engaged.

Not even when the expresses brought word from Boston that the town had at last been evacuated by the redcoats did he share in the noisy demonstrations of delight. Still, like Achilles in his tent, he was nursing his wrath against Anthony Wayne, and his anger at the injustice of his leader had been intensified by the actions of the colonel himself. Not once had Anthony Wayne spoken to him, nor did he even appear to be aware of Noah's presence in the company. Several times the leader had laughingly greeted Caleb, or stopped for a word with dull-witted Joe Latrobe, when Noah was near, but for Noah

himself he had never a greeting. Apparently he had cut the young soldier off from his list of friends.

In spite of his suffering, — for Noah, though he had not even complained to his cousin of his treatment, was feeling keenly the neglect of the man whom he had revered as he had no one except his own father, — the young soldier was striving faithfully to do whatever task was assigned him, and, unlike many of his comrades, had not once been sent to the guardhouse for disorderly conduct. The men of the Pennsylvania companies were notorious for their escapades, though they were accounted as among the very best soldiers who had enlisted, and Noah felt that he was entitled to some consideration for his conduct. But if Anthony Wayne was aware of his former protégé's faithful work, as the days passed he never betrayed his knowledge by word or deed, and the feeling of bitterness in Noah's heart steadily increased. He had been eager to return for a day to his friends on Staten Island, and at least express his gratitude to them for what they had done for him, for that was the form in which the wish declared itself

to him. Many of his comrades sought and easily obtained leave of absence, but Noah Dare resolutely put the wish from him, determined that not a shadow of a cause for neglect of duty should be even apparently cast by him.

He shared in the excitement of the men when the report came that Benedict Arnold had failed in his attempt to take Quebec, and rejoiced, too, as much as any one in the rumor that the daring man had not abandoned his project and was still in the region of the St. Lawrence, intent upon winning Canada to the side of the colonies that were launched on the struggle for their liberties.

The death of General Montgomery had affected him as it did all the patriots in the town,¹ and then when the report spread and gained credence among the men that Washington, freed from a part of his anxieties by the departure of the redcoats from Boston for Halifax, was about to send some of the soldiers from New York to assist in the invasion of Canada, and that Anthony Wayne's camp-fire was likely soon to be

¹ General Montgomery's body was brought to New York in 1818, and reburied with all the honors the nation could bestow upon the fallen hero.

transferred to the northern border, even Noah Dare's enthusiasm apparently returned in full force, though his colonel had not as yet spoken a word to him since his return to his company.

On the day when Noah heard the rumor he chanced to be walking along Broadway, and directly across the street he perceived Rachel Wheeler and her brother. Eagerly he crossed to the side where they were, but as he drew near he was chagrined when Rachel, gazing straight at him, turned coldly away, and apparently had no word of greeting for the young soldier whom she had rescued in her own home.

CHAPTER XXX

IN THE NORTH

ANGERED as well as chagrined by the sharp rebuff, Noah turned quickly away, hardly recognizing the greeting of Samuel who apparently had been inclined to stop and speak to the young soldier; but his purpose had been frustrated by Rachel, for she hastily seized her brother by the arm and dragged him forward with her.

Noah watched the two young people until they soon turned into a side street and disappeared from sight, and then he himself retraced his way and started back toward the camp.

There could be but one solution to this slight, the young soldier assured himself, as he proceeded on his way, and that was that Colonel Anthony Wayne must have told of his own feeling for him, and Noah's anger at the leader became quickly more intense. What right had Anthony Wayne to scatter such reports without giving him even an opportunity to explain? To Noah,

in his somewhat selfish thoughts, the fact that it was extremely improbable that the colonel had ever seen the Wheelers, or that his young private was of sufficient importance to cause the leader to refer in any way to what he had done, did not occur. He was humiliated, his pride had been stung, and he was rebelling against the false light in which he had been placed by the injustice of the man whom he had revered even more than had his cousin, Caleb. All the eagerness now was apparently gone, and as Noah slowly walked back to rejoin his comrades his feeling of rage steadily increased. He was aware how futile any protest of his would be if Colonel Anthony Wayne did not choose to listen to him. And he had not listened — as Noah was only too well aware. To go to the leader and beg for an opportunity to clear himself was something which the young soldier could not force himself to do. He angrily declared to himself that he could and he would bear the indignities in silence. No one should ever hear him complain.

As for Rachel Wheeler — if she chose to believe lies concerning him, and her

confidence in him was so slight that the first whispered word of evil could turn her against him, then he would let her go and never think of her again. Somehow the determination did not afford much relief, and when at last he had entered the camp, it is safe to affirm that amongst all of Anthony Wayne's loyal followers there was not one so wretched or so miserable as was Noah Dare, whose self-pity had now become the one great controlling element in his life.

"What's wrong, Noah?" demanded Caleb, as he perceived how downcast the face of his cousin was.

"Nothing," retorted Noah glumly.

"You don't look it, Noah," laughed Caleb.

"I'm not trying to."

"Homesick, Noah?"

"No!"

"Conscience troubling you?"

"No!"

"Well, what *is* the trouble?"

"Nothing, I tell you!" answered Noah sharply.

"Yes, there is."

"I tell you there is n't!"

Caleb, aware now that it was useless to try to induce his cousin to explain when he was in his present mood, whistled softly and then became silent as he watched Noah striding slowly toward their tent. But Noah's strange mood did not depart. Faithfully and regularly he performed his appointed duties, but that something, in which he himself was not permitted to share, was troubling his cousin, Caleb was fully persuaded. Several times he thought of consulting Colonel Anthony Wayne concerning the change which had come over Noah's spirits, but the days passed and the opportunity did not present itself. Consequently the word was not spoken, and Noah Dare's sulkiness remained unexplained, and apparently became more pronounced with every passing day.

Not even when at last the battalion was really on the point of departure for the St. Lawrence did Noah's interest return. He heard the word much in the same mood in which he had watched the coming of the men who had marched to New York from Boston. If he was interested he did not betray his interest by any excitement. He

prepared to depart with his comrades, and accepted the orders in the same indifferent manner in which he lately had performed all his tasks. The sole exception had been the shout he had given with his fellows when first he had seen the commander of the colonial army, for George Washington himself was now in New York, in personal command of the troops assembled there. The strong face, the powerful body, the determination and the courage expressed by the quiet and yet forceful manner of the new general, had all been deeply impressive to Noah; and though at first he had been silent when he watched the commander as he rode past the men who had been drawn up to receive him, the shout which Noah soon raised was so loud and long and enthusiastic that Caleb turned and glanced in wonder at him. But the one prolonged cheer evidently had given vent to all of Noah's enthusiasm and his former mood soon returned, apparently with increased power.

The lighter-hearted Caleb, who had felt somewhat hurt by the failure of his cousin to confide in him the cause of the trouble which so manifestly was pressing

heavily upon Noah, was nevertheless greatly elated and excited when at last the word was given by Washington that General John Sullivan, who outranked General Thomas, at that time in command of the forces on the St. Lawrence, was to take six battalions and "proceed with all due haste" to the aid of the patriots in the north. With General Sullivan, Colonel Anthony Wayne and three of his companies were to go, and in the companies were Caleb and Noah and Joe Latrobe.

At Albany, for the first time, all of Anthony Wayne's men were supplied with muskets. Thus equipped, even Noah's interest was in a measure restored, though he still refused to explain to his cousin the cause of his moroseness. But Caleb was too keenly interested in all that was occurring to give much heed to Noah's glumness, and when the warmer days arrived, and, on the bateaux which had hastily been constructed, the men were transported over the beautiful waters of Lake Champlain, Caleb was so enthusiastic over what every new day revealed that he no longer, even silently, invited his cousin to share his confidence with him.

There were times when the boys were detailed to march with the teamsters that hauled the luggage of the little army over the rough roads along the shores of the lake. Even then the Pennsylvania men added to their fame as a "noisy, quarrelsome, roistering set of men;" but Caleb was not troubled by the outbreaks, knowing well, as he did, that it was merely the way his comrades took of displaying their exuberant spirits.

It was not until the passage down the lake had been nearly completed that the disquieting rumors from Quebec were confirmed, and when at nightfall, after a wearisome march on the shore, Caleb rejoined Noah, he had some strange tales to tell.

"Noah," he said, "things have gone to smash."

"What things?" inquired Noah, without betraying any special interest.

"Why, things around Quebec. There's no doubt of it! General Thomas has left the town and is coming up the St. Lawrence."

"Retreated?" demanded Noah, now thoroughly aroused.

“Yes, sir. That’s just it. It seems his force had divided till he did n’t have more than five hundred men, and half of them were sick with smallpox and the other half starved or worn out.”

“But they’d held on all winter,” protested Noah. “What made them give up now? They would n’t do it! They could n’t!” he added angrily.

“They did, and that’s all there is to it! It seems six British frigates had made their way up the river to Quebec, and when three of them landed their marines, there was n’t anything left for our men to do except to start. They’d held a force three times as big as theirs in the old town all winter long, but they could n’t keep it up any longer. If Benedict Arnold had n’t been wounded so that he could n’t keep the command, maybe” —

“There is n’t any ‘maybe’ about it if what you say is true, Cale,” interrupted Noah.

“It’s true,” said Caleb dolefully. “Everybody knows it except you, and you’d have heard of it, too, if you had had your ears open. The men are all talking about it.”

“What’s to be done? Have you heard that?” inquired Noah, ignoring the implied rebuke of his cousin.

“No one knows, unless it is General Sullivan or Colonel Anthony Wayne, and perhaps they don’t know. I know what I’d do.”

“What’s that?”

“I’d march straight back to Quebec. I’d pound the old walls to pieces! I’d keep it up till”—

“You ought to go and tell Colonel Anthony Wayne just how to do it, Cale,” said Noah. “He’d be glad to have your advice. He’d do what you told him right away.”

“Never you mind that, Noah,” retorted Caleb good-naturedly. It was good to see Noah in better spirits, and if his cousin would only be himself once more he was willing for him to rail to his heart’s content.

Caleb’s prophecy, however, proved to be correct, for the line of march was changed, and with all haste the little advancing force pushed forward to Sorel, the little village at the mouth of the outlet of Lake Champlain to which General Thomas and his men had retreated, and arrived there on the second day of June.

The joy over the coming of reinforcements was quickly dispelled by the death of General Thomas himself on the very day of the arrival of Sullivan, and the depression which had prevailed at once returned. Many of Thomas's men were ill with smallpox, the disease from which the leader himself had suffered, supplies were scant, and sickness as well as the lack of food and powder had sorely tried the brave fellows. A part of the force, too, had left the camp led by Colonel Arthur St. Clair, who had obtained permission from the general to lead a party to Three Rivers, where it was reported that a British force of from four to eight hundred men had taken position. Colonel St. Clair and his followers had departed from the camp only a few hours before the arrival of Sullivan, and the latter upon learning of the plan (for he had at once assumed command of the troops) at once sent General William Thompson with a force larger than that which St. Clair was leading, to go to the aid of the latter. With General Thompson marched Colonel Anthony Wayne with two hundred and two of his own men, and late in the night of June 6 they over-

took St. Clair at Nicolet. On the following night the united forces, "all Pennsylvanians except Maxwell's battalion" (a force of four hundred and eighty-three Jerseymen), crossed the river and landed at two o'clock in the morning, but little did the leaders or men, and among the latter were our friends Noah, Caleb, and Joe Latrobe, realize what lay before them.

CHAPTER XXXI

A STRANGE GUIDE

SEVERAL miles remained to be traversed before the point of attack was reached, and the uncertainty as to the numbers in the British force, the lack of knowledge of the best as well as the most direct route to be taken, and the fact that no sustaining force had been sent or was to be sent for the aid of the advancing patriots, naturally made all the leaders anxious. Because of their anxiety the approach was cautiously made, and many small detachments were sent in advance, and also to the flanks of the force, in order to forestall any peril from an unexpected appearance of their foes.

Our three friends were together in one of these small flanking parties, and separated as they were by several hundred yards from the main body, their movements were all guarded and a careful watch was maintained. Not one of the three men had spoken for a half hour and Caleb, whose

ability to conceal his fears was not so great as that of his cousin, was peering about him as the little party moved forward with an anxiety that under other circumstances would have brought a smile from Noah. As it was, however, Noah's silence was an indication that he too was fearful, though he was less demonstrative in his manner of betraying his feelings.

Suddenly Caleb stopped abruptly and clutching Noah by the arm whispered, "There's somebody right ahead of us! Hark! You can hear them now!"

All three at Caleb's word of warning instantly halted, and in a moment the young soldier's statement was confirmed, for three men could be seen in the woods advancing toward the three soldiers. One of the trio was an Indian, another was a lad of fourteen, and the third a man who did not wear a uniform, and there were no means of knowing on which side his sympathies were enlisted. The surprise of the new party was even greater than that of the three soldiers, and for a moment it appeared as if they were about to flee from the spot. Noah, however, holding his musket in such a manner that it could instantly be used if

occasion required, immediately stepped forward and said quietly, "Good-morning to you. Can you point out the most direct way to the place where the red — where the regulars are?" he hastily corrected himself.

"You want to go to Three Rivers?" inquired the man, whose curiosity, as he gazed at the strangers, was manifestly not less than that of the silent red man by his side, or of the lad whose fears were lost in his eagerness to hear what was said.

"Yes, sir. Do you live here?" inquired Noah, glancing meaningly at his two comrades as he spoke, indicating that they were to be on their guard.

"I don't live very far away. Are you a part of the rebel" —

"We belong to General Sullivan's army. I don't mind telling you that. You know the Canadians are our very good friends, and we want you to show us the way we're to take to Three Rivers."

"Just you three men?"

"No, sir. We've a large force right near here."

The man was excited and eager now, and Noah's suspicions were strengthened that

he had none too friendly feelings for the little army that had come, in a measure relying on the friendship of the Canadian people.

“How many?” demanded the man.

“I can’t tell you exactly,” replied Noah, in apparent confidence. “There are not more than three thousand *here*.”

“Where? Where?” asked the man eagerly, glancing fearfully about him as he spoke.

“Only a few yards away. Now what we want of you is to guide us by the very shortest way to Three Rivers.”

“Just you three men?”

“No, no! The entire force.”

The man turned to his companions and in low tones conversed with them a moment. It was impossible for Noah to hear what was said, and he waited impatiently for the response to his demand.

“Did you know there was a big force at Whitehouse? That’s a bit nearer than Trois Rivières. I can take you there if you want me to,” the man suggested at last.

“What’s that?” demanded Noah, instantly excited.

“Yes. There’s an advanced guard at

Whitehouse just as I'm telling you. Maybe your men would rather go there first and cut that force off from the others at Trois Rivières. I can show you" —

"Cale," said Noah to his cousin, "this is the greatest piece of news yet — if it is true. I'll tell you what we'll do. You and Joe Latrobe take two of these men and go back and report to Colonel Anthony Wayne, and I'll go on alone with one of them and see if there really is any such place as Whitehouse and find out if there is a force there. It would be great if we could be the ones to report! And it will make General Thompson glad he's alive if we can just cut off a good chunk of his enemies like this." Turning again to the stranger, Noah said, "Two of you go back with these men," and he pointed at Caleb and Joe Latrobe as he spoke. "One of you go with me and show me where this Whitehouse is, and let me see this advance force you're telling about."

There was a brief whispered conversation between the three strangers, and it was evident that the Indian, who hitherto had not spoken, was now greatly stirred by the words of his white companion. In

a brief time the white man turned to Noah and said, "We're agreed. Of course you'll pay us for what we do?"

"I can promise you that. I'm sure the general will be glad to reward you as you deserve. Come on!" Noah added eagerly. "Look out for them, Cale," he whispered to his cousin. "I don't feel sure everything is all right here, but if what this fellow says is true it's a great thing."

"I'll take you myself to Whitehouse," volunteered the white man, "and these friends of mine will go with the other two back to where you say your men are. They can show the way to Trois Rivières as well as I can."

"How far is it to Whitehouse?" inquired Noah.

"Not very far. It's right down the river not more'n a couple o' miles."

"Noah," whispered Caleb, "don't leave us. I don't like the look of that man. Let's all three keep together. Colonel Anthony will know better than we do what ought to be done."

"I'm going, Cale," said Noah firmly. "We must n't lose any time, and if what this man says is so, even Colonel Anthony

Wayne himself, if he were here, would n't want me to wait. He would n't do that himself, would he?"

"No, I don't believe he would," acknowledged Caleb. "But I don't like to separate" —

"Go ahead, boys," broke in Noah excitedly. "You tell the colonel I'll join the company in a little while. These two can show him the way to Three Rivers, and I'll go with this man."

There was no delay now and Caleb and Joe Latrobe at once departed with the boy and the Indian for the main body, and Noah with the stranger immediately set forth in the direction which the latter indicated as the one that led toward the position held by Carlton's advance guard at Whitehouse. The young soldier followed his guide, who moved swiftly through the forest and did not for a time even glance behind him to perceive whether Noah was following or not. The sunlight found its way through the branches of the towering trees and cast fantastic lights upon the dead leaves which covered the ground. Birds were flitting about in the bushes, and the warmth of the early summer day

seemed to add to the peacefulness of the scene. Even the guide had no musket, and the young soldier's confidence in his own ability to protect himself from possible treachery was unshaken. Indeed, even the fear of war itself seemed to be foreign to the day and place, and yet as Noah advanced through the forest a feeling of uneasiness crept over him, despite the apparent peacefulness of the great forest.

In a brief time the man had led the way to the shore of the majestic river, and as Noah halted upon the bank and the wide sweep of the waters glistening in the sunlight appeared before him, he could scarcely repress the exclamation that rose to his lips. In places he could see that the current was swift, and then again the waters were like those of some peaceful pond. The river itself was wide where the two men halted, and the opposite shore was covered with the dark green of the firs that were growing even close to the borders of the St. Lawrence itself. The mild air, the balmy fragrance of the forest, the rocks and wooded shores, the clear waters of the mighty stream, the calls of the birds, all served not only to impress the young

soldier with the beauty of the scene upon which he was gazing, but also made still more emphatic the loneliness that was all about him. His guide was the only man to be seen, and he was unknown. What treachery he might be plotting no one could know, and in spite of Noah's attempt to reassure himself by declaring that the Canadians must be friendly to the Colonials who were struggling for a liberty that would be alike dear to Colonial and Canadian, his suspicions of his companion, although he was unable to define them, became somehow steadily stronger.

"The redskin left a canoe here this morning," volunteered the man. "We'll take it and save a good tramp along the shore."

"But you said it was only a couple of miles," suggested Noah. "I don't mind that, and I believe I'd rather trust myself to the woods than to the river."

"Prob'ly you never saw any such river as this," laughed the man, as, ignoring Noah's protest, he drew forth a little bark canoe from the bushes and lifted it easily to the water.

"No, I never did," said the young

soldier softly, as he again looked out over the great body of rushing water. The vision of the quiet little Cohansey Creek and the calm waters of Delaware Bay arose before him, and for an instant a feeling of intense homesickness swept over him. His father, his mother, his own quiet home in Greenwich — how sadly they were all out of keeping with this present position, standing on the bank of the far-away river, his sole companion a man whom he did not know and of whose honesty he was already suspicious, and engaged as he was in an expedition filled with peril and of whose outcome he was by no means certain.

Noah was roused from his brief reverie by the voice of his companion. "Put your gun on the bottom of the canoe and sit down in the bow while I hold the ticklish thing."

"I can keep my gun quiet."

"Put it where I tell you." The man spoke gruffly, and it was evident that he now had slight fear of the young soldier. Indeed there was but little in the outward appearance of Noah to indicate the possession of such marvelous physical strength as

was his, and the confidence of the man was perhaps only natural.

Concealing his momentary hesitation Noah obeyed, and carefully placing his musket on the bottom of the canoe took the place indicated for him. The man also took his place in the stern, and then, pushing with his paddle, thrust the light little craft out into the current, which speedily caught it and bore the party swiftly down the stream not far from the shore. The novelty of the experience for a time served to hold Noah's attention. His sensation, he fancied, must be like that of some of the birds which he could see flying low across the waters, but the canoe had not gone far before birds and canoe were alike ignored in the startling interruption that came.

CHAPTER XXXII

NOAH'S PLIGHT

THE man with Noah, after the canoe had been caught in the current of the great river, apparently had ignored the presence of the young soldier. Occasionally he had made use of his paddle, but only to keep the little craft headed down the stream. As Noah keenly watched his companion, he became convinced that the man also was intently watching for something or some one he expected to see before him, and the young man's fears again asserted themselves. He was deeply suspicious of his guide by this time and, as he recalled the words and actions of the man when he had informed him of the near-by presence of the patriots, he was angry at having placed himself completely in his power.

It was almost impossible for Noah to perceive what was ahead of the canoe, for he was facing his companion; but he watched the expression of the man's face with an intensity that with every passing

moment increased his fear. As he endeavored to turn himself about to see what lay before the advancing canoe the man spoke sharply and said, "Sit still there! Do you want to have us both in the water?"

"Where are we going?" demanded Noah, as he settled back into his former position. "Where are you going to land?"

"You'll find out in due time," replied the stranger. "All you've got to do now is to keep quiet."

"But where are we going to land?" persisted Noah. "I don't want to go straight into the hands of this force" —

Noah ceased abruptly as a loud call arose farther down the stream. Unmindful of the danger of his action, he turned himself quickly in the canoe and peered before him. The frail little craft careened, and both the occupants were nearly thrown into the river, but Noah was too intent upon discovering what was ahead to give any heed to the turning of the canoe, which had quickly righted itself, or to the exclamation of anger which came from the man in the stern. He was eager to find out the meaning of the unexpected shout

he had heard, and all other things for the moment were ignored.

He was unable to discover any one on the shore or river before him, however, but his fear had increased until he felt that no longer was it possible for him to remain where he then was. The attitude of his companion was even more suspicious than it had been before, and the fact that other men were near, who at least were not afraid to make known their presence, aroused him to the determination to do something at once.

Cautiously resuming his place he looked again at the man in the stern of the canoe, and discovered that he was leaning forward evidently reaching for the gun. Without a thought of anything save preventing the man from securing the weapon, Noah almost sprang from his place as he, too, reached forward for the musket.

There was an exclamation of anger or dismay from the man at the young soldier's action, but before either could draw back, the canoe was instantly overturned and both men were struggling in the water. As Noah arose to the surface he could see the canoe a few yards in advance of him,

floating and overturned, and without giving a thought to his companion he instantly struck out, determined to overtake the fleeing craft before it could be seized by the other man.

Despite the weight of his clothing and the coldness of the water, Noah Dare in a brief time had secured a grip on the overturned canoe, and still clinging to it he pushed it before him toward the shore, which here was not more than ten yards away. Both the young soldier and the canoe were borne swiftly down the stream, but they had not gone far before he had succeeded in driving the little craft in near the land, and in a few moments he felt beneath his feet the bottom of the river. Stumbling forward he drove the canoe before him, and then, lifting it in his arms, he struggled up the bank and deposited his burden within the border of the great trees.

Then for the first time, still breathing heavily, he turned and peered back at the place where the accident had occurred, to discover what had become of his recent companion. To his consternation not a trace of the man was to be seen. The wide

sweep of the waters, the strong rushing current, the blue sky, the towering trees, were all as they had been, but not a vestige of the missing man was to be found. Sobered by the fact, Noah stood for a few moments where he then was, but soon he began to run along the shore peering at the banks and out over the river to discover, if possible, the man struggling somewhere in the river. He was tempted to call, but the recollection of the strange shout or call he had himself heard a few moments before restrained him as the thought of his own peril recurred to him. He was farther up the shore, but still the man was not to be found. He turned and gazed down the stream thinking that possibly the man might have been borne by the current farther away, but there was nothing to be seen in that direction to indicate that his recent companion had been swept away.

At last, concluding that the man must have been unable to swim and had been drawn under the treacherous waters, Noah abandoned the search, and then for the first time became aware of his own plight. The sun was by this time low in the western sky, and the young soldier shivered, despite

the warmth of the summer day, with the cold. His clothing was heavy and wet, and the chill that was upon him was all the more marked now that the day was departing. Withdrawing within the shelter of the trees he took his coat and shoes, and wrung the former and emptied the latter. He could not be seen from the river he was positive, although he himself was able to see it from his hiding-place.

Suddenly he stood erect, and breathless with excitement perceived two canoes on the water before him, one containing a white man and two Indians, and the other with three white men in it. The canoes were being paddled up the stream in the direction from which he and his recent companion had come, and from the actions of the men it was manifest that they were looking for some one, for they were moving slowly and all were watching the shores and the river before them. Startling as the sight was, it still was not altogether unexpected, for the one call which Noah had heard had in a measure warned him of the near-by presence of other men, and no great reasoning was required to convince him that they were not of his own force. With-

out moving from his shelter Noah watched the canoes until they could no longer be seen, and then turned back toward the place where his own canoe had been left. Without any plan as yet formed, he examined the little craft, admiring its lightness and strength, but convinced that it was no longer of use to him, for the paddle had been lost in the overturning. His musket also was gone, and he was without any means of defense.

The outlook was not promising, he ruefully acknowledged to himself, and then for a moment he stood thoughtfully considering what he ought to do. He had not had any food since morning, his gun was gone, and he was unaware where Colonel Wayne's men were by this time. His best plan, he was convinced, was to return with all haste and strive to overtake his comrades, for he had a general idea as to the direction in which they must have gone. The darkness would soon be upon him, but not even that peril or the songs of the countless mosquitoes that now were "singing" about him must be permitted to interfere with his task.

He was about to start back up the shore

when the two canoes that had passed him were seen returning. There were only five men in them now, and what had become of the sixth was an added perplexity. Had he been landed? Was he to return by the shore? The questions were not consoling to the troubled mind of the young soldier, but the sight of the passing canoes instantly caused him to change his plans. The man who had accompanied him in the canoe had declared that a large force of the redcoats had been stationed at Whitehouse, and he had also declared that the little point was close at hand. Had the man spoken falsely? The presence of two canoes seemed to imply that he had not, and Noah Dare instantly decided that he must make some attempt to find out the truth. He was not far from the place where the men were said to be, and to return without having made at least an attempt to learn the truth concerning the size and presence of the force was not to be expected. Surely Anthony Wayne would not lightly abandon such an opportunity if it had been presented to him, Noah thought, though there was still a trace of bitterness in the suggestion. The dashing

young colonel had not in any way seemed to be aware of Noah's presence in his force, for not a word had he spoken to him since the men had departed from New York. All this did not alter the nature of the opportunity of learning of the presence of the regulars, as the man had stated, and Noah was firm in his determination to learn more before he even attempted to rejoin his comrades. The sun had disappeared from sight now, and it would not be long before the summer night would be at hand. As the young soldier glanced again at the canoe at his feet, he decided to make use of it in his attempt. Although he had no paddle he could float with the current, and by keeping a sharp outlook along the shore as he passed, he might be able to discover the spot where the "advance force" was encamped.

He found, after a brief search, a pole which might be of service to him in an emergency, and placing it on the bottom of the canoe, when the darkness had deepened he lifted the light little craft in his arms and carried it down to the water's edge. Before he embarked he once more peered out over the waters and along the

shores, but only the dim outlines of the trees could be seen, and only the musical rippling of the waters be heard. Apparently he was the only man in all the region.

For an instant a feeling of intense loneliness again swept over him. He fancied he could almost see the lighted candles in the far-away house of his father, and even hear his mother's voice as she was seated near the table in the centre of the room, doubtless knitting as was her custom of an evening — for him. Then for an instant he thought of the home into which he had been welcomed on Staten Island, and of the strange actions of Rachel Wheeler when he had chanced to meet her with her brother on Broadway. What did she mean? Why had she ignored him? The questions seemed strangely out of place, but still they would come even on the distant shores of the mighty St. Lawrence.

Resolutely the young soldier endeavored to ignore them, and placing his canoe on the water he carefully took his place within, after he had used his pole to push the little craft out into the current. He seated himself in the middle, lying back so that only his head appeared above the gunwale,

and then while the canoe noiselessly glided slowly forward with the current, he maintained a careful outlook as he passed the dark and shadowy shore. For a time the watch kept him alert and intent, but at last the very monotony of his task served to deaden his excitement. Whether or not he had been asleep he was unable to decide, but he was startled as he suddenly became aware that the course of the canoe was changed, and he was being borne steadily and directly toward the shore beside which he had recently been slowly drifting.

CHAPTER XXXIII

CAPTOR AND PRISONER

PEERING over the gunwale Noah was startled as he perceived that a man had seized the canoe by the bow and was drawing it toward the shore. Even in the dim light he was aware that it was not his recent companion who now had hold of the canoe, for this man was not so tall as the other and his bearing was entirely different. Apparently, too, the man did not suspect that there was any occupant, for he had not even peered into the little canoe.

For a moment Noah was tempted to leap into the river, as he was convinced that the water must be shallow, for the man was wading through it and was in no fear. Resisting the impulse until the shore was gained, Noah suddenly sat erect, when the man attempted to draw up the canoe, and then stepped quickly out upon the ground.

The surprise of his rescuer would have been ludicrous under other circumstances, for the sudden start and the exclamation

which escaped the man's lips betrayed his complete astonishment. He did not offer to flee, however, and as he faced Noah he demanded:—

“Who are you?”

“Can't you see?”

“No, I can't. What were you doing in that canoe?”

“Nothing.”

“Where are you going?”

“How far from here is Whitehouse?”

“You passed it. It is n't more than a quarter of a mile back.”

“That is where Carleton's advance guard is?”

“Is it?” responded the man so quickly that Noah was instantly aware that there was something wrong in what he had said.

“Why, yes,” he responded. “At least I was told the men were there.”

“How many?”

“Four or five hundred or more.”

The man laughed as he said, “Then you heard what isn't so. There are n't more than ten there.”

“Are you sure?”

“As sure as I am that I've got you.”

“You’ve got me, have you? Well, what are you going to do with me?”

“Take you to Whitehouse since you’re so anxious to go there. You are not one of our men. I can see that even in the dark.”

“Who are ‘our’ men?”

“That I’ll leave you to find out for yourself.”

“How are you going to take me there?”

“That’s easily enough done. You did give me a start though. I thought the canoe was just drifting down the river.”

“So it was.”

“Well, it is n’t drifting any more.”

“So I see.”

“We might as well start at once.”

“Go ahead.”

The man carried a rifle, but it was evident that he was not altogether satisfied that his prisoner was unarmed. He advanced suspiciously and said: “You’ll let me have your arms.”

“I can’t do that,” retorted Noah lightly. “They’re fast.”

“You have no weapon of any kind?”

“Nothing except my arms.”

The man laughed good-naturedly, and

apparently satisfied, said, "Come on, then, and we'll start for Whitehouse. You may be all right, you know, but I'll have to take you with me and let you give an account of yourself."

"That's good of you."

"I can't help that—it's my nature," responded the man, as he prepared to advance.

"Tell me," said Noah quietly, "were you one of the men that called out here a few hours ago?"

"I didn't call out," said the man, in surprise.

"Some one did."

"It might have been" — The man did not complete the sentence, for he stopped abruptly and demanded, "Why are you here?"

"You can answer that question better than I."

"You're not a spy?"

"You can see for yourself."

"No, I can't see. That's the trouble. You'll have to come with me."

"Didn't I tell you that was what I wanted? Didn't I say I was wanting to go to the place where the advance guard is?"

“Yes, but there is n’t any advance guard there.”

“Go ahead. We’ll go to whatever it is that is there then. I don’t care what you call it.”

“Come on,” said the man abruptly, as he turned, and, walking beside Noah, began to retrace the way along the shore.

The young soldier made no protest, and together the two men proceeded on their journey toward the place where the advance guard of Carleton’s army had been reported to be. Neither spoke for a time, but the younger man was striving to think of what he should do. He was eager to ascertain the exact condition at the point, but if it should be possible to obtain the information he desired without entering the place, he was determined to do so. His fear of the man by his side, despite the fact of his being armed, was not great. In a personal contest he was positive he could already foretell the outcome. The very confidence of his companion would make him the more easily to be overpowered when Noah’s arms were flung about him, but for a time the young soldier did not intend to solve his prob-

lem in that manner if first he could obtain the information he desired.

In a brief time the two men arrived at a point where, before them, the place they were seeking could be dimly seen. It was manifest that the men who were there had slight fear of an attack, for a huge pile of logs was burning in an open space, and by the light of the flames Noah was able to perceive that a few huts were near by. Not even a guard could be discovered, though Noah was well aware that his inability to perceive any did not by any means prove that none was there. He was gazing intently at the place before him, and quickly concluded that the man who was now with him had spoken truly when he had declared that not more than ten men had been assigned to duty at Whitehouse.

Without warning he instantly turned and seized his companion, exerting all his strength in the bearlike hug he gave. Taken off his guard the stranger was unable to defend himself, although Noah was instantly aware that the man was no match for him.

Wrenching the gun from his companion's grasp, and freeing the man as he

faced him, Noah said in a low voice, "Will you be good or shall I have to help you to be?"

"What do you want?" demanded the man sullenly.

"I want you to come with me."

"Where?"

"Never mind that. Will you come without making any noise?"

"Yes."

"Very well. Now I want to get around this place. Can it be done without arousing any of the men here?"

"Yes."

"All right. You go ahead and I'll follow you. I don't know whether your gun is loaded or not, and I don't much care. But if you call or do anything out of the way I'll use it. Now go ahead."

Without a word the man turned into the forest and Noah followed, keeping close to his companion, ready at any moment to fulfill his threat. It was plain that the man now had a wholesome respect for the strength of his captor, and that, as well as the fact that Noah was at his heels and held a gun in his hands, served to make him tractable. A wide *détour*

of the place was successfully made, and when at last the point had been passed without any one being aroused, Noah decided to let his man go. To bring a prisoner with him into the camp of Anthony Wayne would be a pleasure that appealed strongly to the young soldier, but as he was not familiar with the region and the presence of another man with him might increase his own peril, he decided to send the man back.

"You can go," he said abruptly, as he called to his companion to halt.

"Go?" responded the man, in surprise. "Go where?"

"Back to the advance guard."

"Do you mean it?" said the man eagerly.

"Of course I do. I thought at first I'd take you with me and let you see how a colonel who is fighting for you as well as for us feels toward a man that doesn't even care enough for his own liberty to fight for it."

"How far away is he?"

"He is n't far and you'll know it, too, before long. Now, then, you go back and I'll be with my men almost before you know it."

The man did not delay but instantly darted into the forest behind, and in a moment disappeared from sight. If he had been able to see, the young soldier's actions would certainly have puzzled him, for instead of doing what he had suggested, Noah, too, began to move cautiously and slowly in the direction in which his recent prisoner had gone. The young soldier was determined to know more definitely just what the conditions at Whitehouse were, and even if he was unable to take back to the Chester company a prisoner, he was resolved that at least more definite knowledge than he then possessed should be his.

Accordingly, using the utmost caution, he hastily returned to the place where the advance guard had been reported to be. He was not surprised, when he drew near enough to behold what was occurring in the camp, to perceive ten men assembled in front of the great fire, about the man whom he had recently sent back to the camp. It was impossible for the young soldier to hear what was said, but the actions of the men were sufficient of themselves to betray their excitement. They were talking

eagerly, and frequently turned to gaze into the forest in the direction in which the recent prisoner pointed. Noah had no difficulty in understanding that the report which the man had brought had of itself aroused the excitement of the little garrison, which doubtless had been assembled as soon as the man had returned.

In a brief time Noah was aware that a decision of some kind had been made by the men, and when the entire band hastily collected their belongings and set forth from the camp, advancing toward the very spot where he himself was sheltered, he fancied that he understood what was in the minds of the approaching men.

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE DARING OF ANTHONY WAYNE

IT was not difficult for Noah to avoid the attention of the approaching men, for the darkness was still about him and the great trees provided secure hiding-places. Accordingly taking his place behind a huge trunk of a tree, he was within a few yards of the men when they passed him, and not one of them was aware of the presence of the watching young soldier.

Noah remained where he was until a half hour had elapsed, and then, convinced that the men were gone and would not return, he hastened into the camp from which the men had come and eagerly began to investigate.

A thorough search convinced him that the place had been abandoned and that nothing of any value had been left behind. It was also manifest that at no time had many men been stationed there, and therefore he concluded that the report which had influenced the leader as well

as Anthony Wayne had purposely been misleading.

The one purpose in Noah's mind now was to return to his battalion, if possible, and report his discovery at once to his colonel. Despite his hunger, for hours had passed since he had tasted food, and the weariness which now oppressed him, he was nevertheless still eager; for he pictured to himself the reception he would have when his colonel, who had treated him so unfairly, should learn what he had done. But where was the army? All definite ideas of direction were gone from the young soldier's mind. He could only conjecture where his comrades might be at the time, and after a brief hesitation Noah decided to withdraw into the shelter of the surrounding forest and wait for the daylight to come, which he was positive would soon appear.

Stretching himself upon the ground, it was not long before the wearied young follower of Anthony Wayne was soundly sleeping, and when he awoke, it was to find streaks of sunlight all about him in the forest. The very air, too, seemed to be alive with the songs of the birds. Angry that he should have been found in such

a plight, Noah quickly arose, and after he had searched the camp for food and found none, he resolutely set forth in the direction in which he was confident his recent comrades must have gone.

He had not advanced far, however, before he was startled by the sound of heavy firing in the distance. Halting abruptly, he listened until he was convinced that he had not been deceived, and then plunged forward, making all possible haste and following the direction from which the sound had been heard.

It was not long before he found himself in what appeared to be a rough roadway, and speedily he discovered many evidences that men — many of them — had been there before him. Quickly concluding that he had found the way over which his own friends had advanced, he pushed forward with increased speed, and the firing in the distance became steadily louder and more distinctly heard.

When he came to what seemed to be a forest on his right, he halted for a moment and again listened. The sound of the guns had ceased, but he was convinced that he knew his directions now, and would save

much time by plunging into the forest and leaving the road. Accordingly, without hesitating any longer, the young soldier entered the woods and pushed eagerly forward. For a time his way was secure, and not a sign of danger could be discovered. Soon, however, the firmer ground beneath his feet gave way to a marsh, but still he steadily pressed onward. The marsh soon became a swamp. He sank in the mud to his knees in places, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that he was able to proceed at all. Bushes and low trees now took the place of the giants of the forest, but not a thought of abandoning his attempt had as yet occurred to the struggling young soldier. Before him lay the place where the firing had been heard, and there he was convinced he would find his friends. Besides, the ground looked firmer a little farther on, and when once he had gained that, many of his difficulties would be passed, he assured himself.

To his dismay, instead of becoming firmer, the ground over which he was passing seemed to be softer. He sank in one place to his waist, and only by the exertion of his entire strength was he able to extri-

cate himself. He was spattered with mud, his face was no longer recognizable, and his breathing was labored and difficult. Still he pushed forward, hoping that the firmer ground would soon be gained, but a low cry escaped his lips when to his dismay he stepped into another concealed spot in the bog and sank to his armpits. His struggles now seemed to be unavailing, for try as he might, the mud sucked him down and his efforts to free himself only served to make him sink still farther into the mire. His eyes were filled with an expression of terror as he looked about him for aid. Even a cry escaped his lips, but the only apparent response came from a great blue heron which lazily rose from some near-by spot and with long, trailing, graceful sweeps of its broad wings flew slowly across the bog. The sight of the graceful bird was well-nigh maddening, and the long legs seemed almost to tantalize him. If only he could grasp them and be drawn from his predicament!

But help nowhere appeared. Exhausted by the struggles which now he had abandoned, Noah endeavored to think more calmly of what he might try to do in his

efforts for release. Despair, however, seemed to be the sole answer. He was helplessly held in the grip of the mud that came nearly to his neck.

Once more the vision of his father's house came to him. He could see and almost seemed to hear the members of his family as they assembled in the dining-room. At the very moment, doubtless, his mother was speaking of her absent boy. What would she say if she knew his plight and peril?

Then, too, the young Quaker, Elnathan, and Thomas Hull arose before the vision of his mind. There was no sympathy to be expected from them, and the smiles he fancied he could see upon their faces were not those of sorrow. The house on Staten Island in which Rachel Wheeler dwelt also could be so plainly seen that even the vines about the door appeared real. There had been only the deadened stalks in the flower-beds when Noah had been there, but now it almost seemed to him that he could see the purple blossoms of the wistaria. Perhaps Rachel would be sorry she had —

Noah's thoughts were interrupted when suddenly he became convinced that men

were approaching. There were many of them, too, and it was evident that they were meeting troubles like those which had beset him in his efforts to cross the swamp. The figures seemed to be bobbing up and down much as the fleet little Swallow used to be tossed when the waters of Delaware Bay were roughened in a storm. Was he only dreaming? Were the men he could see approaching only the creatures of his own distorted imagination?

That they were real and not imaginary, he was speedily convinced. He raised a cry, and in response some of the men halted. He called again, and could see that one had left his fellows and was approaching. As the man drew near his face strongly resembled that of Joe Latrobe, but Noah was strangely indifferent. Even when he felt his arms grasped and knew that he was being pulled steadily from the mire, he felt neither surprise nor pleasure. He knew that aid had come and that was all.

He was next aware that he had been placed upon firm ground and that some one — and now he was convinced that it was indeed Joe Latrobe — was chafing his hands. He knew, too, that many men were

passing. He could see their forms and hear their voices as some shouted, some cursed, and others laughed. They were all somewhat fantastic in their appearance, however, and all seemed to be leaping about as if they were engaged in a contest of some kind.

It was not long, however, before strength returned, and Noah arose. "Where did you come from, Joe?" he demanded.

"Come to help you," responded Joe Latrobe grimly. "Can you go on now?"

"Yes. I think I can. Where's Cale?"

"He isn't here."

"Got anything to eat, Joe?"

"Yes. Here, take it. If you can go on"—

"I'm all right," responded Noah, as he seized the food, and, despite his covering of mud, began to eat ravenously. The young soldier's hat was gone, but he still had his gun, to which almost instinctively he had clung in all his troubles.

Following Joe Latrobe, Noah began to move again through the morass. By the aid of his friend he leaped from hummock to hummock, and when at last the firm ground had been gained, he had somewhat regained his strength, though his appearance

was such that his friends would have had difficulty in recognizing him. He and his companion had now arrived in the open fields which covered the point of land between the two rivers (St. Maurice and St. Lawrence) that united where the little village of Three Rivers stood. The bespattered and bedraggled Americans were now seen by the redcoats, and General Fraser ran from his camp to the bluff and shouted in his frenzy to the war-ships to send all their guns ashore. Two or three thousand of the rebels were coming and were already close to the town!

Anthony Wayne's men were in front, and already a strong column was advancing to meet them. At the same time a number of men-of-war began to fire from the rear, and Noah Dare was speedily aware that he and his comrades were within range.

Without hesitating a moment Anthony Wayne, all excited now, ordered the company in which Noah and Joe Latrobe were marching (Caleb had not as yet been seen by his cousin) "to advance and amuse the enemy," as his own report expressed it; and then, forming the remainder of his battalion in line of battle, pushed steadily for-

ward until he had "arrived within short range," where he swung his two ends forward in the form of a crescent and began to pour his cross-fire into the British column, which soon scattered and ran in confusion.

But now off on Wayne's right flank new troops appeared. Perceiving that the rest of the Americans were now emerging from the swamp, Anthony Wayne, without delaying a moment, marched straight for the enemy's camp, where he had discovered that breast-works had been previously thrown up, and behind them were the regulars, who greatly outnumbered his own little force. In consternation the daring young colonel looked about him for aid. Off to his right he could see that General Thompson was retreating, while on his left the sturdy Jerseymen under Maxwell were being driven back into the swamp by a body of regulars much larger than theirs. Only about two hundred men were with Anthony Wayne now, and they were to face the combined fire of the force of three thousand British regulars.

A quick retreat was the sole hope, but as the men turned back and gained the border of the woods, Wayne shouted to his men

and made a stand, as he called to others to join his battalion. Before him the redcoats could be seen advancing in overwhelming numbers. His one hope now was to protect the retreating Americans. Detachment after detachment marched safely away until at last only twenty-six men remained with the dauntless young colonel. For an hour the fearless little band held its ground, and among the little squad were Noah Dare and Joe Latrobe. Then the crisis came.

CHAPTER XXXV

RECOGNITION BY THE GENERAL

WHEN the united forces of the regulars were seen approaching, even Anthony Wayne was aware that further efforts on his part were vain. His own men by this time were safe behind the shelter of the wide morass, and accordingly the word to retreat was given. Few of the little band of twenty-six were aware that their leader had been wounded in his right leg, for despite the pain which the young colonel was suffering, his enthusiasm was unchecked, and he leaped from hummock to hummock with his men, and even assisted in pulling from the mud the unfortunate victims who slipped and fell. Once when Joe Latrobe fell into the soft mud and Noah was exerting himself to pull his friend out, another pair of hands were laid upon Joe's shoulders, and in a moment the bespattered and woe-begone soldier was drawn to a place of safety. When Noah glanced up to perceive who it was that was aiding him, he

discovered that he was face to face with Anthony Wayne. But there was no expression of friendliness or even of recognition on the young colonel's part, and the bitter feeling in Noah's heart was in nowise relieved.

There was slight opportunity afforded, however, for the young soldier to nourish his grievances, for all the time and strength of the little band were required for the effort to move swiftly through the treacherous swamp.

At last, when the border had been safely gained, the colonel discovered that the men who had preceded him were in confusion and so greatly excited that his own efforts were required to bring about even a semblance of order. But Anthony Wayne's most prominent characteristic was his ability to do this very thing, and in a brief time he had accomplished what he desired, and his force, containing six hundred men, was moving up the north shore of the St. Lawrence. When they had advanced about nine miles, a detachment of British regulars, outnumbering the little force of Americans, suddenly appeared.

The engagement did not last long, how-

ever, as neither side appeared to be eager for a battle, and soon Anthony Wayne's men resumed their march toward the mouth of the Sorel, where they hoped to be able to cross to the opposite side of the river. On the third day of the march the force, now increased to eleven hundred men by the addition of stragglers, arrived at the place it was seeking. Then it was learned that General Thompson, together with one hundred and fifty officers and men, had been made prisoners, and that about fifty had fallen in the fight. As it was confidently believed that the loss of the British was much greater, the courage of the men with Anthony Wayne was not dampened, though the hopes of accomplishing the purpose for which they had come were less bright.

General Sullivan now learned that a force of thirteen thousand British regulars was advancing from Montreal, and his sole hope of safety lay in a prompt retreat. Soon¹ a British fleet was coming up the St. Lawrence and at once the American leader gave the order to break camp, and, taking their camp equipments with them,

¹ June 14, 1776.

his men were ordered to retreat up the Sorel toward Lake Champlain. It was more difficult now to maintain order, for the men were burdened with the sick as well as with their belongings, and the fears of an attack by the British were so keen that among some of the men there was little less than a panic.

At this time Benedict Arnold, who now was in command at Montreal, sent his aide¹ to Sullivan begging for reinforcements. General Sullivan at once sent forward to Arnold's aid Baron de Woedtke, a German volunteer who was in command of the rear guard. The orders were for him to detach five hundred men to go to the help of Arnold.

So great was the confusion and fear among the Americans that it seemed almost hopeless to attempt to enter Montreal. But the young colonel was found marching with his men apparently in the highest of spirits — a feeling so contagious that his followers also seemed to share in the courage of their colonel. Colonel Wayne at once accepted the order to lead the detachment, and halting at a bridge on the

¹ Major James Wilkinson.

way, gave the command to stop every man who appeared to be alert or active. In less than an hour the desired number was found, and then with Joe Latrobe and Noah among them, started at once for Longueville, the little town opposite Montreal on the St. Lawrence.

When the detachment had proceeded two miles, Anthony Wayne learned from his scouts that Arnold had already escaped from Montreal, and accordingly the force turned toward Chambly. It was now on the same road over which the main body of the retreating Americans was marching, and when Anthony Wayne's men were discovered, there was almost a panic among the soldiers, who believed that it was the British army itself that was approaching. The young colonel pulled out his glass and watched the effect of his approach upon his recent comrades apparently with the greatest glee. He laughed and shouted and slapped his sides as he beheld some of the men fleeing, while others were making a desperate attempt to prepare for the battle which they manifestly believed was about to be fought.

The mistake was speedily discovered,

and then the united army continued its retreat from Chambly to St. John's. At the latter place the bateaux were loaded with the munitions and the sick, and after everything about the old fort that could be burned had been set on fire, the men entered the water and began to push the bateaux up the rapids. For six weary miles this task was upon them — officers and men alike exerting themselves. Sometimes they were up to their necks in the water, sometimes the soldiers lost their footing and the heavily-laden craft would be torn from their grasp. Noah and Joe Latrobe were working together, but still not a trace of his cousin had Noah been able to find. Perplexed and fearful as Noah was by the strange disappearance of Caleb, all his strength and efforts were required in his heavy task, so that it was impossible even to make inquiries concerning the missing lad. At last the retreating army arrived at Isle aux Noix, and after a brief respite there, pushed forward toward Crown Point, where a few days afterward it arrived in safety.¹

A count of the men revealed the fact

¹ July 2, 1776.

that General Sullivan had now under his command a body of five thousand men, whom he had brought in safety from the danger they had encountered in Canada, but of this force nearly one half was sick with the smallpox, which had made terrible ravages in Arnold's army and had spread until it had threatened the entire invading force. General Sullivan had done a remarkable deed under the circumstances in bringing his followers safely to Crown Point, but the Congress decided that "an experienced general" was needed to command the northern army. Only two men in the American forces were considered equal to the task, — Charles Lee, who afterward was revealed as the greatest traitor in American history, and Gates, who was an incompetent, conceited little dandy. Lee was at first sent to take the command, but Gates in a brief time was substituted. General Sullivan, angered and mortified at the unjust treatment of himself, resigned, but the appeals of his own field-officers, Anthony Wayne among them, finally prevailed, and he consented to remain in the army.

Within a few days after the arrival of the

army at Crown Point¹ (General Gates and General Schuyler meanwhile having also arrived), a council of war was held, and it was decided that the army should go on to Fort Ticonderoga, and that the final stand should be made there rather than at Crown Point. A bitter protest against this decision was made by many of the officers, but the plan was unchanged and the army was transferred, while the sick were sent on to old Fort George.

Later² when the British led by Carleton, after the little fleet that opposed their advance in the lake had been swept away, drew near "Old Fort Ti," only a little reconnoitring occurred. Carleton soon went back into Canada and into winter quarters, and the reason for his retreat from Ticonderoga, as he himself expressed it, was because of "the strength of the works, the difficulty of approach, the countenance of the enemy, with other cogent reasons." Doubtless the Americans were content with his departure, whatever his explanation may have been.

As the summer passed, seven regiments of Continentals were withdrawn from Fort

¹ July 7, 1776.

² October 11, 1776.

Ticonderoga and sent to the aid of Washington, who at that time, above all other times in his life, was in need of aid. Defeated in the battle of Long Island, fighting again at Harlem and at White Plains, his men slaughtered in what afterwards was called Fort Washington, the great general was then retreating across New Jersey, with few followers and many of them disheartened, more of his men being prisoners of the British in New York than were left with him in the army. Surely the great commander was in need of help, for neither he nor his discouraged though determined followers were aware of the stand that was to be taken at Trenton or Princeton.

When Gates departed from Fort Ticonderoga, it was at his suggestion that Anthony Wayne was placed in command,¹ and soon "Colonel" Wayne was changed to "General" Wayne. The enthusiasm of his men at this recognition was boundless, although only two thousand four hundred and fifty-one all told were in his force, and of this number only about eleven hundred were fit for duty.

¹ November 18, 1776.

One day after the army had taken its final stand at Ticonderoga, Noah Dare chanced to meet the new "General" face to face. The young soldier saluted and was about to pass on, when he was surprised to hear Anthony Wayne say sharply:—

"Stop a minute, Noah. I wish to speak to you."

Astonished at the familiar and friendly tone, Noah turned quickly about. It had been many weeks since he had spoken to the man before him, and he had long since believed that the injustice he was suffering would not be explained.

"You have done some great work, Noah Dare," began Anthony Wayne in his impulsive manner, which once had fascinated and completely won the heart of the young soldier.

"Have I?" responded Noah quietly, not knowing what more to say.

"Yes, sir, you have. I've been proud of you."

Noah smiled a trifle bitterly but did not reply.

"I'm going to see that you don't suffer for it. Which would you rather be, an orderly or"—

“My time is up in a few weeks,” interrupted Noah.

“You are not going home even if it is!” exclaimed the new general.

“Yes, sir.”

“You must n’t! Why, man, we’ve just begun! Why, since independence has been declared” —

“Since what!” almost shouted Noah, now as excited as his leader.

“That’s it! The Congress has declared that we are now the free and independent colonies of America. I have just had the word. It’s true. We shan’t stay here in this forsaken hole very long. We’ll have things to do. For my part I believe¹ this is the last part of the world that God made, and I have some reason to believe it was finished in the dark.”

Noah smiled, though his excitement now was great. The entire problem was changed if Anthony Wayne’s words concerning the Declaration of Independence were true. And somehow Noah Dare was convinced that they were true. Suddenly he turned again to the man before him and said eagerly, “Can you tell me where

¹ The very words of Anthony Wayne.

Caleb is or — or what has become of him?"

"Why, have n't you heard? Don't you know?" demanded General Anthony Wayne quickly.

CHAPTER XXXVI

CONCLUSION

FOR a moment Noah stared blankly into the face of the man before him. The color faded from his cheeks as thoughts of the unknown fate of his cousin presented themselves, and he was almost fearful of the reply to the question he was about to ask. At last he said slowly, "Where is Caleb?"

"Fort George."

"Is he" — Noah did not complete the question, but he was aware that Anthony Wayne understood.

"Yes, he came down with the small-pox. I heard that he was one of the men that against all orders inoculated himself with the virus from some of those who were sick. The fools! I thought Caleb knew better."

"Do you know he did that?"

"No. I don't 'know.' I'm telling you what I heard, that's all. I lost sight of him back there near Three Rivers, where that

rascally boy and the redskin who pretended to know all about the shortest path to the town led us out of our way and into that swamp. We were almost as great fools to trust them as those men were who thought they'd get rid of the smallpox by just making themselves catch it. Did you ever hear the like? Well, I lost sight of Caleb there as I was telling you, but afterward when I made some inquiries about him I found out that he was one of the men that were down with the disease, and then I heard that he had been sent on to Fort George along with the rest of the sick men."

"Have you heard anything from him — how he is — what has" —

"Not a word! Not a word! Don't you be scared, Noah, for if anything had happened, such as you suspect, I certainly would have known it. I look over the lists every day" —

"May I go up there?"

"When?"

"Now. To-day. Just as soon as I can find" —

"Noah, are you going home?" broke in Anthony Wayne. "Your time will be up in three days, for I have looked up the

matter. We can't hold you here if you are determined. But I don't want you to go, I don't want you to go at all! I have too few men here as it is, and I will do my best to see that you are made an orderly. I shan't forget what you have done."

Noah glanced up quickly, but though he was confident that Anthony Wayne understood the question in his eyes, the young soldier was also aware that the man before him would never explain or apologize for the strange break that had come in their friendship. Still, now that the former cordial relation had been restored, Noah's heart was warm at the friendly manner of the leader whom in all his troubles he had never ceased to admire.

However, he said quietly, "I must go home first. My time is out, and before I enlist again I must ask my father. There certainly will be more work to be done."

"There certainly will," assented the general eagerly. "And you'll promise me that when you enlist you'll come right back to your old company?"

"That's where I'd rather be—if I come back."

"And I'll not forget my promise to you."

“Thank you,” responded Noah. “Now may I go to Fort George?”

“If you are to leave Fort Ti so soon you would do better to wait until then, and stop for Caleb on the way. His time is out, too, I am sorry to say.”

Noah said no more and turned away. For three days he remained in the camp, but he had slight interest in the deeds of his fellow soldiers. At night-time huge fires were kindled, and in the light of the flames the rough and hardy men forgot their hardships and sufferings. They sang songs and told stories, and frequent were the rough-and-tumbles and the wrestling matches between the champions of the rival companies. Into these matches Noah steadily refused to be drawn, but Joe Latrobe, who had reënlisted, as had also many others whom Anthony Wayne personally had urged to do so, was in many of the bouts, and Noah was his strong supporter.

At last Noah Dare, together with a few others who were about to depart from the fort for the same reason for which he was going, failed to find Anthony Wayne when he went to the commander's quarters, and so was unable to bid him good-by. He left

his message, however, with Joe Latrobe, and when he set forth for Fort George Noah had no thought that Anthony Wayne would be left until the following spring in the place which the leader had declared was the "last which God had made, and that Ticonderoga had been finished in the dark." Had it not been for Noah's anxiety for his cousin he would have been even more impressed than he was by the majesty of the mountains, the coloring of the sky, and the marvelous beauty of the waters. His own opinion of the region was markedly different from that of his commander, but the fact that he was on his way homeward made the level stretches of West Jersey seem to him the most beautiful spot on earth. There was home, and Noah's eagerness was shared by his companions, though not one of them hailed from Jersey.

When the little party arrived at Fort George, Noah's usually self-controlled manner was forgotten as he began his search for his cousin, and his delight was great when he found Caleb that very day declared able to start for home. Caleb's face bore the marks of the disease from which

he had suffered, but otherwise he was apparently the Caleb of old, and his enthusiasm at the meeting was more demonstrative than was Noah's. For a long time the two boys talked together, each explaining to the other what had befallen him, and Noah's interest was keen in his cousin's story of how the "guides" who had been sent to the camp had proved their falsity by leading the Americans into the swamp. It was there that Caleb had been taken ill, and what had occurred afterward was dim in his mind.

On the following day Noah and Caleb departed from Fort George, but their journey toward New York forms no part of this present story. As the returning men decided to cross New Jersey, though some planned to stop at the American camp at Morristown, Noah, now no longer under the direction of the army, since his "time" had expired, explained to Caleb that before they returned to Greenwich he had decided to go over to Staten Island and stop at the home of the Wheelers. In vain did Caleb point out the peril of such a venture at a time like that in which they found themselves. The redcoats were on every

side, and the fact that Rachel Wheeler and her brother had not been friendly when his cousin had last seen them was emphasized by Caleb. To all these suggestions Noah would not listen, and at last Caleb reluctantly consented to make the attempt. There were delays and adventures on the way, and the reports of the patriots as to the danger that beset Washington and his little army were disheartening; but at last the two boys arrived on Staten Island, and soon afterward approached the house in which Rachel Wheeler dwelt.

It was Noah now who had misgivings, and he almost wished he had not come; but it was too late to draw back, and he boldly announced their presence by the aid of the heavy knocker on the door. It was Rachel herself who responded, and startled by the sight of the visitors, for a moment she stared blankly at them. Very soon, however, her manner changed, and Noah had no question as to his welcome when the young soldiers entered the house.

“Then you thought at last you would come, did you?” Rachel demanded. “And all the time you were in New York you never once came to — to see how my father

and mother were. And the last thing you said when you left us was that you would come back again just as soon as you could."

"I — I wanted to come," stammered Noah. "I could n't get away."

"He's here now, anyway," laughed Caleb, coming to the aid of his cousin.

"So I see. Are you glad you came?"

"I'll tell you later about that," replied Noah, again laughing.

It was soon evident that neither of the boys regretted coming, for their welcome was too warm to be questioned. They were compelled to relate all their recent experiences, and Rachel's interest, as well as her pride in what she heard, was a continuous inspiration to at least one of the visitors. Nothing would do except that the boys should remain until the following day, and then, when Samuel explained to them that he himself was to sail in a large sloop on the following day for Philadelphia, and that he would be glad to have the two boys sail with him, the stay was again prolonged, and the invitation was gladly accepted.

At last the time of departure arrived, and as the boys bade farewell to the Wheel-

ers, Noah's promise to "come again" was so eagerly made that not even Rachel apparently had any doubts of its fulfillment.

It was late in the afternoon when the boys sailed up Delaware Bay, and while they were excitedly gazing at the familiar shores, Noah suddenly exclaimed as a little catboat drew near them, "That's the Swallow! It is, as sure as you're born! And that's Ananias at the tiller and Elias up there in the bow! Hi! Hi!" he shouted.

The hail was heard by the boys in the catboat, which speedily was run alongside as the sloop was docked, and in a moment their excitement was even keener than that of the two young soldiers when they recognized their friends. In a brief time Noah and his cousin, after thanking Samuel Wheeler for his kindness, and bidding him and the other men on the sloop good-by, were on board the catboat, shaking hands, laughing, and Caleb almost in tears, as they were greeted by their old-time friends. Elias explained that he and Ananias were about to return to Greenwich for the night, and Noah at once decided to go with them. Caleb, however, was to return to his home in Chester, and as soon as the good-bys

had been spoken, the other three boys at once set sail for Greenwich. After Noah had received assurances that all were well in his home, though his absence and the ceaseless anxiety concerning him had told severely upon his father and mother, he was compelled to relate what had befallen him and Caleb during their march with Anthony Wayne.

“Has anything been heard of Tom Hull?” he demanded at last.

“Not a word,” said Elias.

“And Elnathan?”

“Oh, he and his father are more for peace than ever,” laughed Ananias. “You ought to have seen them when we had our celebration over the Declaration of Independence. They were worse than they were when we burned the tea.” In his eagerness Ananias again told the story which he already had related to Noah of the excitement that had greeted the action of the Congress. Then more soberly he continued, “But somehow it does n’t seem to work very well. Driven back from Canada, running from New York, it almost seems as if we ’d never make it.”

“That’s the way I feel about it,” said

Noah. "But a man on Staten Island (the young soldier did not state who the man was) told me he was sure it was better for us to be beaten at the start."

"I don't see why," responded Elias.

"He said it must compel us all to get closer together. If we won at the start, every colony would go its own gait. Now we'll have to go together."

"I hope we'll go in the right direction," said Elias. "Noah, are you going back to join the army?" he suddenly demanded.

"I am if my father does not object, and I don't think he will."

"I am sick and tired of this patrol. I wish Ananias and I could go, too," said Elias dejectedly.

"Why don't you go?"

"If you are going, I believe our fathers will let us go, too," said Ananias quickly.

"Let's try it, anyway, Elias."

"We will that!" responded Elias fervently.

"Better wait till I find out whether or not I'm going," suggested Noah.

"You'll know to-morrow, won't you?"

"Come around to the house and I'll tell you," said Noah slowly.

The little catboat was now near the dock, and the twinkling lights could be seen in the scattered homes of Greenwich. Yes, there was his own father's house; Noah could see it distinctly, and the rush of tears to his eyes made him turn away his face so that his companions might not see his weakness.

Home again! No longer by the camp-fire of Anthony Wayne! For a time no more hunger, no more cold to be endured, no more swamps to be traversed! To see his father! To look into his mother's face! Oh, it was good to be back in Greenwich once more!

"Never mind us!" called Elias, as Noah, without waiting for the catboat to land, leaped out upon the dock. "We know how you feel. See you in the morning."

But Noah Dare made no response as, running at his swiftest pace up the familiar old street, he leaped the fence, and disregarding the shrubbery and flowers darted up the steps, and without waiting to announce his coming opened the door and with a shout entered his father's house.

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